Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Tucson Observer Archives

Tucson Mourns The Death Of Maurice Grossman

Maurice Grossman as Pride Parade Grand Marshall Ist October

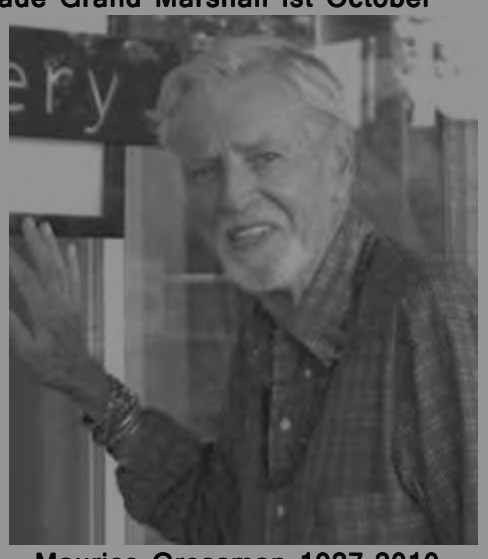
TUCSON - It came suddenly and it came sadly! Maurice Grossman, a dear icon to the LGBT community of Tucson, passed away at Tucson Medical Center Thursday, January 21. He went in for heart surgery and simply wasn't strong enough to make it through. He was 82 years old. Maurice Grossman was a father, craftsman, activist, University of Arizona Professor emeritus, a public figure who was recognized and endeared as he touched many Tucsonans.

Grossman was born in Detroit. He attended Wayne University and Ohio State University before moving to Tucson to teach in 1955, said Lauren Grossman. Her father started the university's ceramic program in 1957 and was in the University of Arizona Fine Arts Department as a professor for about 35 years. where he served as a role model for students, faculty and staff. His work has been shown in numerous galleries and exhibitions, earning him national renown. Grossman came out as a Gay man after the death of his wife. "Gay rights were very important to him, as were human-rights issues in general,"his daughter Lauren Grossman said.

His energy and interest in the activities around him are what made him a familiar character in Tucson. We will quote some of these in the words of his friends and admirers:

Stephen Grossman said his father "was a man of great generosity of spirit, and he raised himself up from very poor circumstances. And the opportunities that he created for himself, and the wonder that he attained and enjoyed in life, he wanted for everyone."

Robert Wrenn, a psychology professor emeritus, said Maurice was a great storyteller who loved to laugh. "He walked into the room and everybody kind of lightened up because he had this big heart and he always had an optimistic view on things," he said.



Maurice Grossman 1927-2010

Paul Durham, co-chair of the Southern Arizona Stonewall Democrats, said it was difficult to go anywhere with Grossman without running into someone who knew him. "He was just an absolutely remarkable, unique, irreplaceable person."

Maurice was Grand Marshall for Tucson's Pride Parade last October and was the 2009 Wingspan Godat Award recipient, among his many other awards. He was a founding member of the Stonewall Democrats and he attended almost every LGBT and political event.

Though he was married and in love with his wife until she died, Grossman said he knew he was gay before then. In 1978 Grossman became more politically active in the gay community. He volunteered with Wingspan and Stonewall Democrats in Tucson. He waited a few years before he told anyone he was gay. "When I told my (My Children) , they knew; they said, 'we've known for years,' Grossman said. He said there was no real fallout or loss of friendships because of his revelation.

At presstime there is no information about the pending funeral services. Full information will be made available as soon as details are known.

R.I.P.

Hawaii Senate Passes Civil Unions

HONOLULU (Observer Update) - The Hawaii state senate approved a bill that would legalize civil unions by a vote of 18-7, reported advocate.com.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, the final vote came after an amendment to change the effective date, which would have retroactively enacted civil unions, of the legislation failed to garner enough votes to pass.

The state house will now consider the amended bill, HB 444 SD1, which contains the changed effective date. If passed by both the house and a conference committee, the bill would then head to Gov. Linda Lingle's desk. Though she may veto the bill, the legislature's Democratic majority may have enough votes to override her veto, according to the Associated Press.

"This particular fight for HB 444 has spanned more than two years, but is just one more step in the decade's long struggle for equality that so many residents of Hawaii have sought," Alan Spector, legislative affairs cochair for Equality Hawaii, said in a statement. "The road has been long and the fight has been emotional, but today we're one step closer to providing equal rights and responsibilities to all of Hawaii's loving couples and their families."

Federal Lawsuit Filed In OPM Case

SAN FRANCISCO (Observer Update) - Lambda Legal has filed suit against the federal government in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, reported advocate.com.

The lawsuit requests an order directing the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to obey prior rulings by Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals Chief Judge Alex Kozinski awarding spousal health insurance benefits to Ninth Circuit judicial attorney Karen Golinski.

Kozinski ruled in January 2009, that denying Golinski spousal health insurance for her wife, Amy Cunninghis, was illegal discrimination. He ordered the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts to submit Golinski's health benefits election form to her insurer, Blue Cross/Blue Shield. OPM disagreed with Kozinski's order and told Blue Cross not to comply.

"It's a bit shocking that we've reached this point with the Obama Administration. Where is our 'fierce advocate' for LGBT rights?" said Jennifer C. Pizer, National Marriage Project Director for Lambda Legal and co-counsel for Golinski.

Last November, Kozinski issued a further ruling explaining that he has the authority, under both the Ninth Circuit's Employment Dispute Resolution (EDR) Plan and the constitutional separation of powers doctrine, to interpret laws governing the rights of judicial employees. His order gave OPM thirty days to comply or appeal. The controversy drew heightened national attention when, instead of doing either, OPM issued a press release saying the order was not binding and that the U.S. Department of Justice had advised OPM not to comply in light of the 1996 so-called "Defense of Marriage Act" (DOMA). When OPM failed to appeal by the December deadline, Kozinski held that his prior rulings had become conclusive and binding against OPM.

"OPM's refusal to give their analysis - even informally - is the most telling. If they are confident Judge Kozinski is wrong, why didn't they tell us, and him, why they think so? Simply defying his orders is a slap in the face to Karen and the entire LGBT community and bizarrely disrespects the judiciary. At a minimum, federal courts have the power and responsibility to end discrimination against their own employees. The whole point of the court's EDR tribunal is to give judicial employees the same meaningful recourse as other federal employees. OPM has said nothing to suggest the Chief Judge's reasoning on this point is mistaken," Pizer added.

The lawsuit asks the federal district court to order OPM to rescind its instruction to Golinski's insurer, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, not to enroll Cunninghis in Golinski's family health insurance plan so the coverage for Cunninghis can begin.

"The timing of this lawsuit is painfully ironic," said Golinski. "It falls between the first anniversaries of Judge Kozinski's original ruling in my favor and the new Administration's arrival in Washington with its promise of positive change for lesbian and gay Americans. I deeply appreciate the commitment of my employer - the Ninth Circuit - to fairness and equality, and I wish this lawsuit were unnecessary."

Lambda Legal's Pizer represents Karen Golinski in this matter together with James McGuire and Rita Lin of Morrison & Foerster LLP.

The case is Golinski v. United States Office of Personnel Management.

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UPDATE

Church Gives $5,000 To HIV/AIDS Group

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network received $5,000 from Rincon Congregational United Church of Christ to assist with its food ministry programs, reported the Arizona Daily Star.

The gift, made possible by the Dunham Trust Fund at Rincon, was awarded by the church's Justice and Witness Ministries Committee. The funds will be used to support TIHAN programs focusing on addressing hunger and nutritional support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

TIHAN's Poz Cafe lunch program has served more than 13,000 meals to more than 600 people with HIV in Southern Arizona. TIHAN also offers a free weekly breakfast for people with HIV, courtesy of Mother Hubbard's Restaurant. Additionally, TIHAN offers emergency assistance for food for its clients and offers additional food support during the holidays. Go online to tihan.org for more information about the work TIHAN does, or call (520) 299-6647.

Out Of The Ashes Of Prop. 102 Rises The Arizona LGBT Political Coalition

Filed by: Bobby Parker
(bilerico.com)

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - The passage of Prop 102 in Arizona, writing discrimination into our state's constitution like its counterpart Prop 8 in California, required our LGBT community to realize that if we didn't stop the bickering and infighting going on among our groups we'd never find the unity needed to be able to mount an effort to win anything. What it takes is a fresh approach and willingness to do coalition-building.

Arizona Stonewall Democrats reached out last September and October to Equality Arizona and HRC in Arizona to explain what our goals are for the upcoming election cycles and offered to work together in a united effort to elect progressives to the Legislature. Both have now responded, and, together with the Arizona Log Cabin Republicans, we have formed the Arizona LGBT Political Coalition. Each organization will take the part of the whole that we have historically taken, and working together where possible to share resources and information, we are united in the common goal of promoting overall agenda of equality for all.

This organization has risen out of the ashes of past attempts that have in essence burned out former participants. That's why the Phoenix rising from the ashes is a good analogy. Below is an explanation of what the 'Phoenix' is all about, and is a mighty good visionary statement for what I see happening in Arizona now.

From Mythicalrealm comes the following explanation of the power of the Phoenix. The Mythical Phoenix Rising - "A mythical bird that never dies, the phoenix flies far ahead to the front, always scanning the landscape and distant space. It represents our capacity for vision, for collecting sensory information about our environment and the events unfolding within it. The phoenix, with its great beauty, creates intense excitement and deathless inspiration." - The Feng Shui Handbook, feng shui Master Lam Kam Chuen

I'm not saying we have created "intense excitement" but the deathless inspiration part holds true. We are all inspired daily by those who have gone before to secure all of the benefits we already have. It's not enough, and so it's up to us to do what is left to do.

Together we have established goals in the following areas: State and Local Advocacy. Voter Registration, Permanent Early Voter List, and Get out the Vote. Education and Outreach.Candidate Support and Fundraising. Developing and implementing Earned Media Campaign.

We met with the editor of a local LGBT magazine who will help us get the word out. We hope those who have contacts in Arizona through Bilerico will pass the information along.

We invite other organizations or individuals that agree with our goals to join us. Email: info@azlgbtpolitics.org.

Tucson LGBT Film Fest January 30-31

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Be sure that you mark your calendars!

The 2nd annual Fabulous Faygeleh LGBT Film Festival, presented by the Tucson International Jewish Film Festival, is coming to the Crossroads Cinema Saturday and Sunday, January 30 and 31.

We have chosen six fabulous films with universal LGBT themes that will appeal to everyone. And, we are especially thrilled that all of the screenings will be introduced and moderated by former Tucson resident and lesbian filmmaker, Brooke Sebold (Red Without Blue).

So, check out the details at tucsonjewishfilmfestival.org and mark your calendars for popcorn and some great and very unusual film.

Desert Voices Concert Jan. 31

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Mark your calendars for January 31, 3:00 p.m. Desert Voices will bring its highly successful November 2009 performances of Upstaged! Divas and Mis(leading) Men to the Desert View Performing Arts Center, Saddlebrook.

Under the direction of Chris Tackett, Desert Voices, Arizona's Premier GLBTS Chorus, leads a gay romp through the best of Broadway and Hollywood with a few stops along the way. Join us as we share some of your favorite show tunes from classic shows and movies from the past through recent stage and screen hits. We'll also preview some selections from our February silent auction/cabaret show, Love Bites.

If you missed us in November, now's your chance to catch a great evening of wonderful, affordable, first rate entertainment. And if you joined us for Upstaged!... why not come to Saddlebrook and treat yourself to 'seconds.'

Tickets $20 per person (+ processing fee); $22 at the door (if available). Purchase tickets at the Mountain View Clubhouse - 520-825-2818 or on the Desert View website at dvpac.net ($3.25 online processing fee). Price includes all applicable taxes.

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Marathon Session Ends Plaintiff's Case In Gay Marriage Trial

SAN FRANCISCO (Observer Update) - Plaintiffs lawyers in the gay marriage trial taking place in San Francisco wrapped up their case, On Top Magazine reported.

After the plaintiff's final witness endured more than 6 hours on the witness stand, Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn R. Walker told him, "You win the long distance award."

University of California at Davis psychology professor Greg Herek gave a full day of testimony on the nature of being gay. Davis' UC bio states he is "An internationally recognized authority on prejudice against lesbians and gay men, hate crimes and anti-gay violence, and AIDS-related stigma."

The trial is the first to challenge the constitutionality of a gay marriage ban in a federal courtroom. Specifically, Proposition 8, the gay marriage ban approved by California voters in 2008.

Lawyers in favor of gay marriage have argued that proponents of Proposition 8 approved the measure out of animus towards gay men and lesbians. The defense says limiting marriage to heterosexual unions fosters a stable environment to raise children.

The plaintiffs, a gay and a lesbian couple, each have been denied the right to marry in California because of Proposition 8. Jeffrey Zarrillo, 36, has testified that Paul Katami, 37, is the "love of my life." Sanda Stiers, 47, said she fell in love with Chris Perry after being married to a man for 12 years without knowing she was a lesbian. She testified that she became a plaintiff in the case because she wants to marry Perry. "I want the discrimination to end and a more joyful part of our life to begin," she said.

Herek testified that being gay was most likely not a choice, and that conversion therapy – the controversial treatment that aims to alter the sexual orientation of gay men and lesbians – has "very limited" effectiveness and the potential to harm individuals.

Lawyers arguing for Proposition 8 pressed Herek for an unequivocal definition of what what it means to be gay. They asked whether sexuality is "clear cut."

"Do you agree that homosexuality is a multidimensional phenomenon?" lawyer Howard Nelson Jr. asked at one point. "That's what I think I've been saying for the last few hours," Herek replied.

Nelson also attempted to suggest that plaintiffs Stiers and Perry had chosen to be gay. He quoted from Perry's statement that after realizing she was attracted to other women, she "adopted that sexual orientation for myself."

Proposition 8 plaintiffs outside the courtroom

"What she described here is she experienced this attraction as an enduring pattern, and after recognizing this pattern in herself, she adopted [the gay orientation]," Herek responded.

Proponents of Proposition 8 are clearly hedging their bets on the argument that sexuality can be fluid. Therefore, gay people have the choice to return to a heterosexual relationship. The plaintiffs, however, want to move the argument that being gay is an immutable characteristic – like race – that deserves legal protection.

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IBT's

SATURDAYS

5-8PM*KARAOKE ON THE PATIO

9PM*SATURDAY NIGHT STARRLETTS
HOSTED BY JANEE STARR
FEATURING: MISS GAY AZ AMERICA TC TAYLOR & CHINA COLLINS

10PM*DJ MIKE LOPEZ ON THE PATIO

11PM*DJ KURRAGE INSIDE

SUNDAYS

12-8PM-HAPPY HOUR
$2.00 DOMESTIC BEER & WELL COCKTAILS

4-8:30PM-KARAOKE ON THE PATIO

9PM-DJ ON THE PATIO

9PM-2AM-CHEAP ASS DRINK NIGHT
$1.50 DOMESTIC BEER & WELL COCTAILS*
$2.50 PREMIUM BEER AND CALL LIQUOR*
*SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY

9PM-2AM-KARAOKE INSIDE

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FEB. 16TH FAT TUESDAY(MARDI GRAS)

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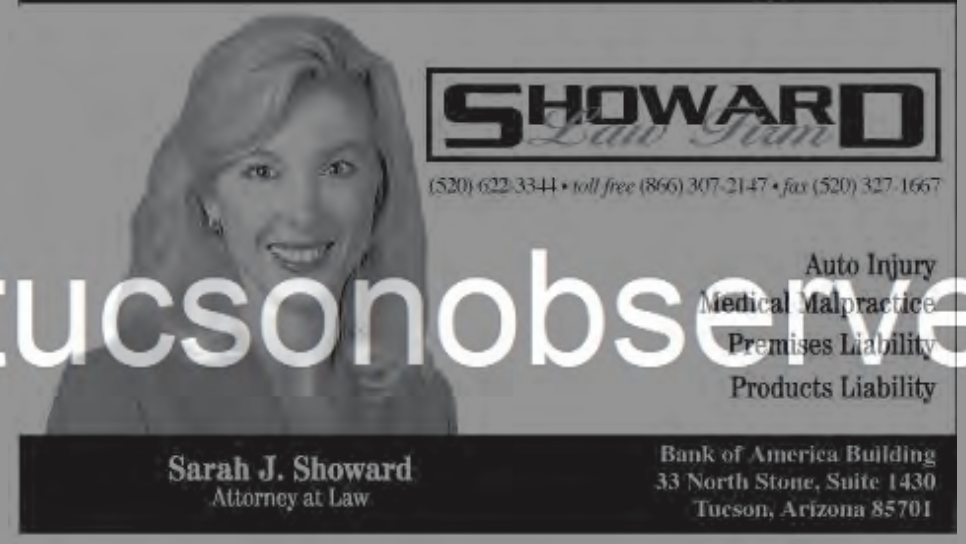
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Obama To Discuss Gay Military Ban

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - President Obama is likely to discuss the military's ban on open gay service during his State of the Union address, a senior lawmaker told reporters.

Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, previously stated that both Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen would be called to testify during a January Senate hearing on repeal of the ban.

"We were told by the Pentagon that they expected the president to say something in the State of the Union on it," Levin, a Democrat from Michigan, told reporters, Reuters reported. Obama will give the annual speech during a joint session of the U.S. Congress.

Levin, however, added: "I have no idea" what Obama will say.

The Senate hearing, which was pushed back in the fall to concentrate on investigating the Fort Hood shootings, will likely be held in early February, Levin told reporters.

The policy, also known as "don't ask, don't tell," is the 1993 law that prohibits gay and lesbian service members from revealing their sexuality at the risk of losing their jobs.

President Obama promised gay activists attending an October fundraiser that he would end the policy.

"I will end 'don't ask, don't tell,'" Obama said. "That is my commitment to you."

Previously, activists working to repeal the ban suggested Obama could end the policy with an executive order. But Obama has already dismissed the idea, saying he was looking for a "durable" solution.

While Levin supports repeal of the military gay ban, his House counterpart, Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, a Democrat from Missouri, does not.

200 At Rally Call For 'Common Ground' In Gay-Rights Fight

SALT LAKE CITY (Observer Update) - A year removed from arguably the most significant legislative push for gay rights in state history, more than 200 people rallied at the Capitol on Saturday to again call for "common ground."

Academy Award-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black called on members of the gay and lesbian community to be peaceful but persistent in their fight, to share their stories and to reach out to others, reported the Salt Lake Tribune. "If people don't know who they're voting against ... they don't so much mind taking away our rights," said Black, who last year won an Academy Award for his screenplay for "Milk." "I did not come to Salt Lake City to protest. I came here to introduce myself and to share a message of love and respect."

Officials from the state's largest gay and lesbian advocacy group, Equality Utah, said their efforts on Capitol Hill would be "scaled back" after last year's campaign – a massive push that never saw a bill escape legislative committee.

"We're going to focus on our municipal efforts," Equality Utah Director Brandie Balken told the Deseret News. "The way we're able to change policy is by getting people on the ground to support those policies. In looking at what happened with our very common sense bills last year, we saw we needed to do more work on the ground."

Balken pointed to the successful passage of Salt Lake City's nondiscrimination ordinances in November as a model for advancing gay rights at the local level. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints publicly supported the ordinances. "They brought stakeholders to the table, and we want other municipalities to have a chance to do the same thing," she said.

Salt Lake City Councilman Luke Garrott called the ordinances' unanimous passage an important milestone for the city and its residents.

"They are about protection from fear," he said. "But they're also about recognition, and recognition is part of dignity."

Still, a handful of state lawmakers have vowed to carry gay rights legislation – workplace and housing nondiscrimination, probate rights and adoption rights – during the 2010 session."

Gay Marriage Foes Not Amused By Logo Likeness

SAN FRANCISCO (Observer Update) - ProtectMarriage.com has sued gay group the Courage Campaign for copyright infringement of their logo, reported On Top Magazine.

The Courage Campaign says its logo for the website prop8trialtracker.com is a parody of ProtectMarriage.com's original logo. The original logo shows a stick figure heterosexual couple with two children. The redesigned logo substitutes a lesbian couple and alters the text. But ProtectMarriage.com, the primary sponsor of Proposition 8, the gay marriage ban approved by California voters in 2008, was not amused by the clever redesign.

In a January 12 cease and desist letter, ProtectMarriage.com demanded the group stop use of the redesigned logo. A formal lawsuit that accuses the Courage Campaign of trademark infringement and unfair competition was filed on January 19 after the group ignored the original demand letter. The Courage Campaign is using the parody logo on a website that follows the historic federal trial of Proposition 8 now in its second week in a San Francisco courtroom. Judge Lawrence K. Karlton denied ProtectMarriage.com's motion for a temporary restraining order prior to a full ruling.

Karlton disagreed with plaintiffs, who said use of the logo was likely to "result in confusion, mistake, or deception to visitors of their respective sites as to the source of origin of its services," saying "the use is not explicitly misleading." "In this case, the logo itself is artistic," Karlton said in his ruling. "Moreover, the broader website, while perhaps not artistic, is undeniably expressive of a political idea, and both political and artistic expression are protected by the First Amendment."

"Defendant's use of the mark has relevance to the expressive message, namely, support for homosexual marriages, and specifically, opposition to recent California efforts to limit the right to such marriages.

This support is expressed by the modification of the 'father' figure in the original mark to depict a second 'mother'."

A January 20 blog entry at the Courage Campaign website called the lawsuit "entertaining." "We continue to be entertained by the Prop 8 attorneys simultaneously admitting that the two images of gay parents and straight parents are 'substantially indistinguishable', and yet failing to grasp that the difference between the logos illuminates the core difference between their views and ours."

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Groups Send AID To Haiti's HIV/AIDS Population

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Observer Update) - With every hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital and largest city, either damaged or destroyed by the series of devastating earthquakes over a week ago, the nation's health care system is in shambles, 365Gay.com reported.

And with more than 120,000 people in the country infected with HIV or AIDS, access to antiretroviral treatments is difficult - even in ideal circumstances. "Here in Haiti, more than 2 percent of the adult population lives with the virus, and hundreds more are infected every year," wrote Craig Kielburger, a Vancouver Sun columnist and founder of Free the Children who traveled in Haiti on Jan. 16 to offer food and medical aid. "Due to the extreme poverty and lack of medical access at the best of times, mother-to-child transmission through breastfeeding or at birth is quite common."

Several corporations and aid groups have taken up the cause and are making concerted efforts to help rebuild Haiti's devastated health care system and provide supplies to those infected with HIV/AIDS. Abbott Laboratories, a global health care company and pharmaceutical provider, initially offered $1 million in humanitarian aid. This week, the company more than doubled their donation, providing $2.5 million in funding and pharmaceutical products.

"The recent earthquake has had a devastating impact on Haiti's limited health care system, which was already facing significant challenges," said Catherine V. Babington, president of the Abbott Fund in a news release. "Building on our existing partnerships with humanitarian organizations in Haiti, we are providing funding and product donations to help address the immense and immediate health needs." The release notes that Abbott and the Abbott Fund have provided more than $34 million in grants and product donations since 2007 to help address health needs in Haiti, including maternal and child health, diabetes, HIV/AIDS and malnutrition.

New York-based Aid for AIDS is also coordinating an effort to help HIV-infected Haitians by collecting unused medications to treat the virus. In addition to collecting life-saving antiretroviral drugs, Aid for AIDS is also amassing medications including antibiotics, antivirals, antiallergics and antiparasite medications to treat infections associated with the virus. Liliana Velaquez, marketing and communications coordinator for the group, said Aid for AIDS is working on sending their third shipment of medications this weekend.

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission is also lending a hand. The group raised more than $10,000 in the past week, the majority of which is going to SEROvie, a Haitian group that provides support to predominantly gay, HIV-infected men. At the time the earthquake struck, a support group was in progress at SEROvie's office in Port-au-Prince - 14 men died as the walls of the building crumbled, said Sara Perle, communications director of IGLHRC.

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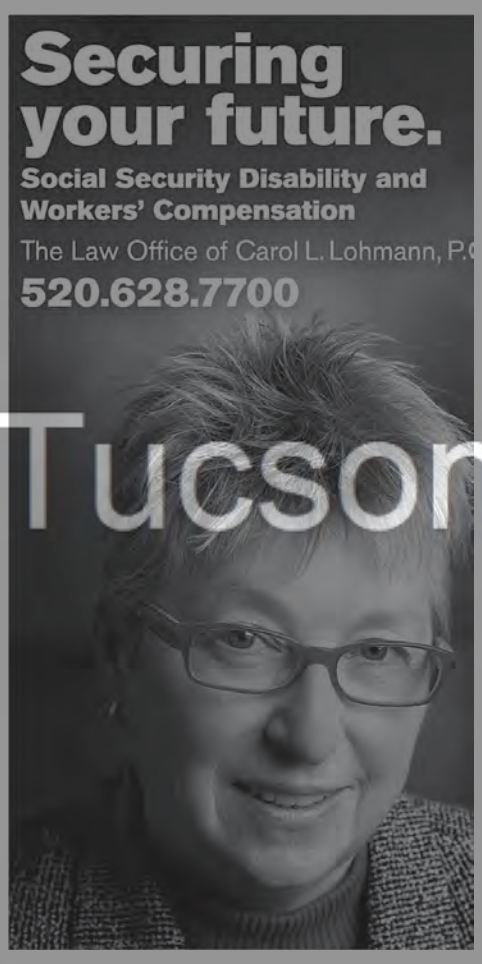

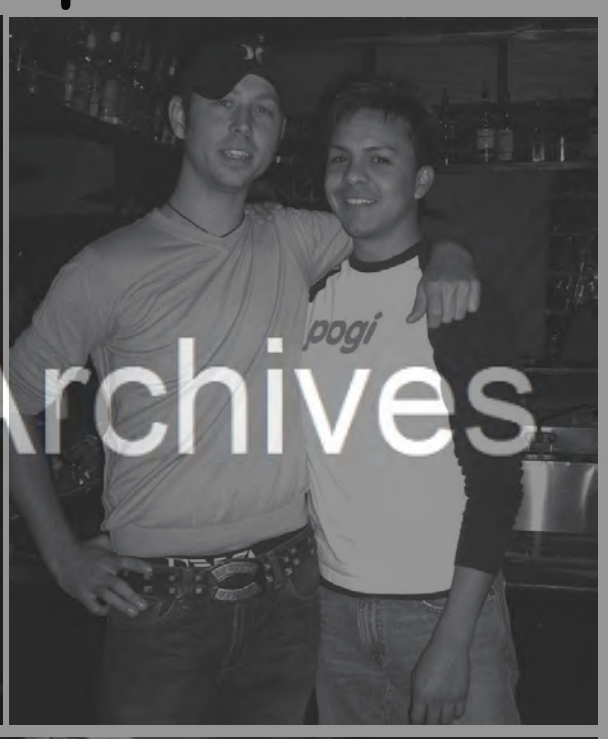

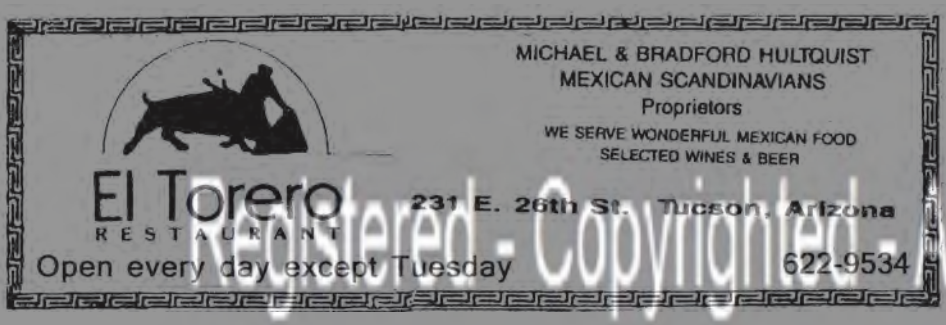

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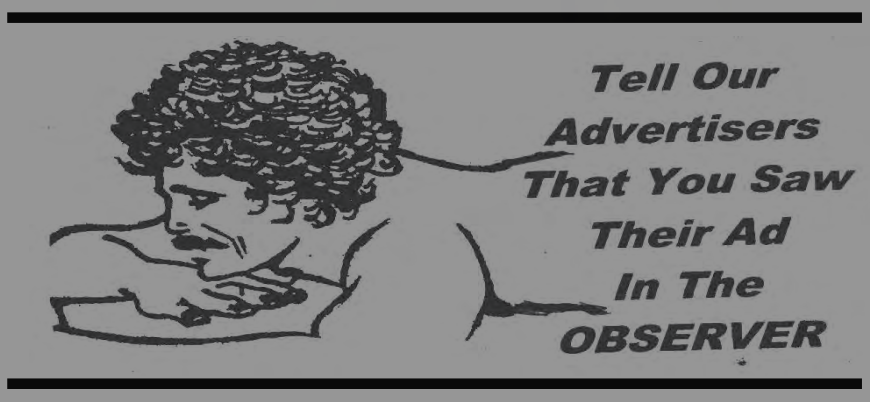

COMMENTARY. . . .

by Dr. Brian Mustanski

New study finds internalized homophobia doesn't predict sexual risk taking.

One of the most widely studied topics in the decades of research on LGBT health has been the concept of "internalized homophobia."

Although definitions of IH differ somewhat depending on the theorist, the concept generally refers to the internalization of society's homophobic attitudes within a lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) person.

Over the years, researchers have found internalized homophobia to correlate with a variety of psychological, behavioral, and medical outcomes like depression, substance use, and sexual behaviors that put one at risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Research on internalized homophobia and sexual risk taking began in the late 1980s in the midst of the HIV/AIDS crisis centered in the gay community. The goal was to understand how anti-gay stigma and victimization affect the health and behaviors of sexual minorities. Ultimately the hope was to use this understanding to help prevent HIV transmission. Since that time many studies have been published on this topic, but the results have been inconsistent.

My graduate student Michael Newcomb (lead author) and I recently published a paper in the journal Archives of Sexual Behavior using an approach called meta-analysis. This approach uses statistics to combine findings across many studies and also lets you test for factors that may explain differences in findings between studies. Our meta-analysis included 16 studies representing research on nearly 3,000 men.

Overall we found a very small relationship between internalized homophobia and sexual risk taking (correlation = .10, p = .053). Most interestingly, we found that the correlation got significantly smaller over time (correlation dropped .02 for every year since 1988) to the extent it is likely to be negligible today. We suggest that negative attitudes towards being gay/bisexual were more important in terms of sexual orientation in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a time when HIV/AIDS was less treatable, carried more stigma, and was more linked to the gay community than it is today. Acceptance of the gay community has also increased during these years. This does not of course negate the reality that LGBT people still face discrimination and harassment.

Based on these findings we suggest that researchers should begin focusing their efforts elsewhere instead of continuing to test the direct association between internalized homophobia and sexual risk taking in gay men. However, internalized homophobia may have more complex association with sexual risk taking or may be important in terms of other health outcomes. We are currently completing a meta-analysis on the relationship between internalized homophobia and mental health and I will report out findings when they come out.

(Dr. Brian Mustanski is an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute for Juvenile Research and is an expert in LGBT health and development. See full bio.

Does "internalized homophobia" still matter? This article is reprinted from Psychology Today.)

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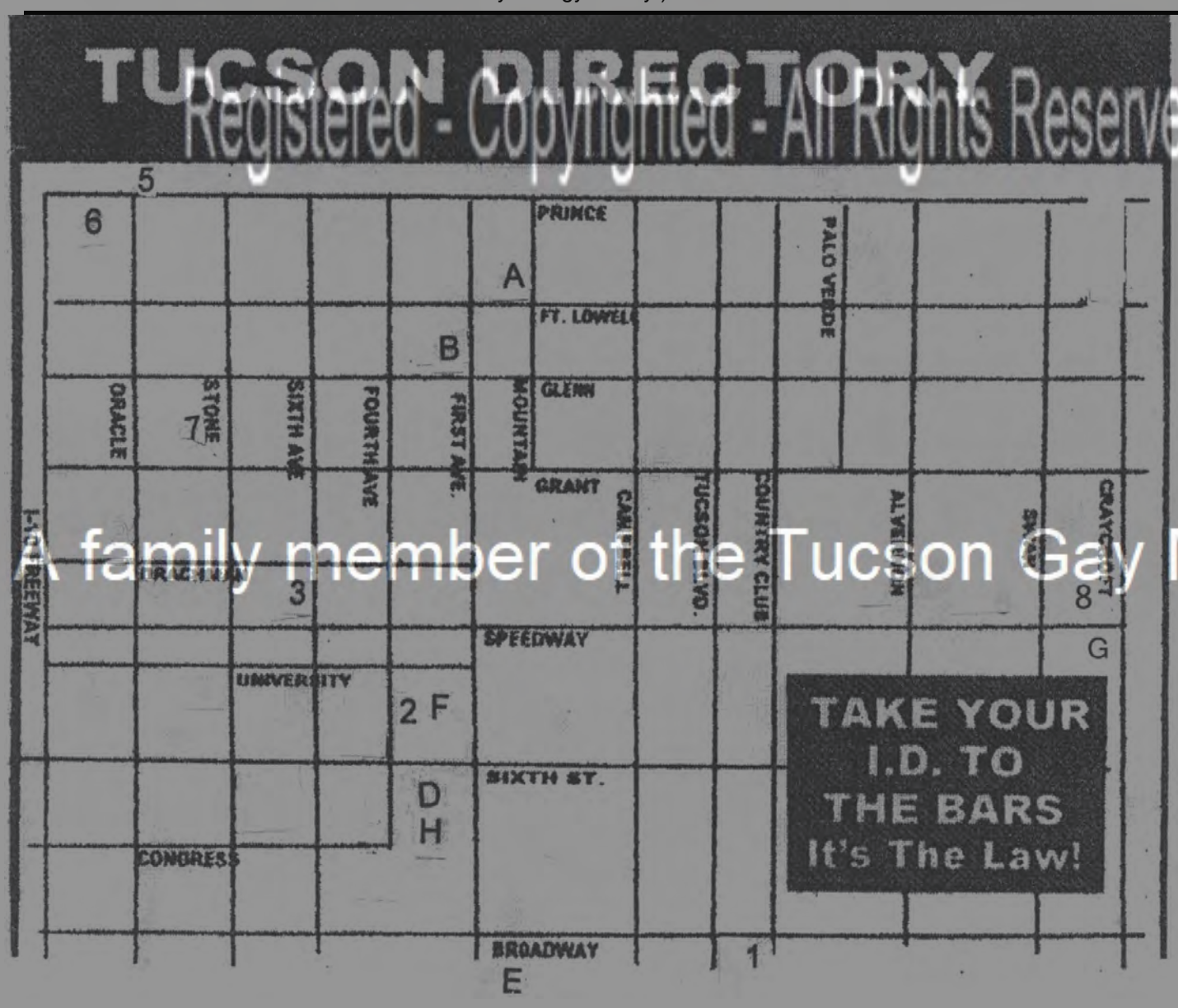

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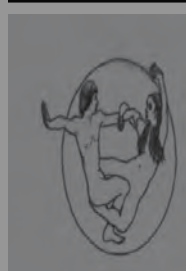

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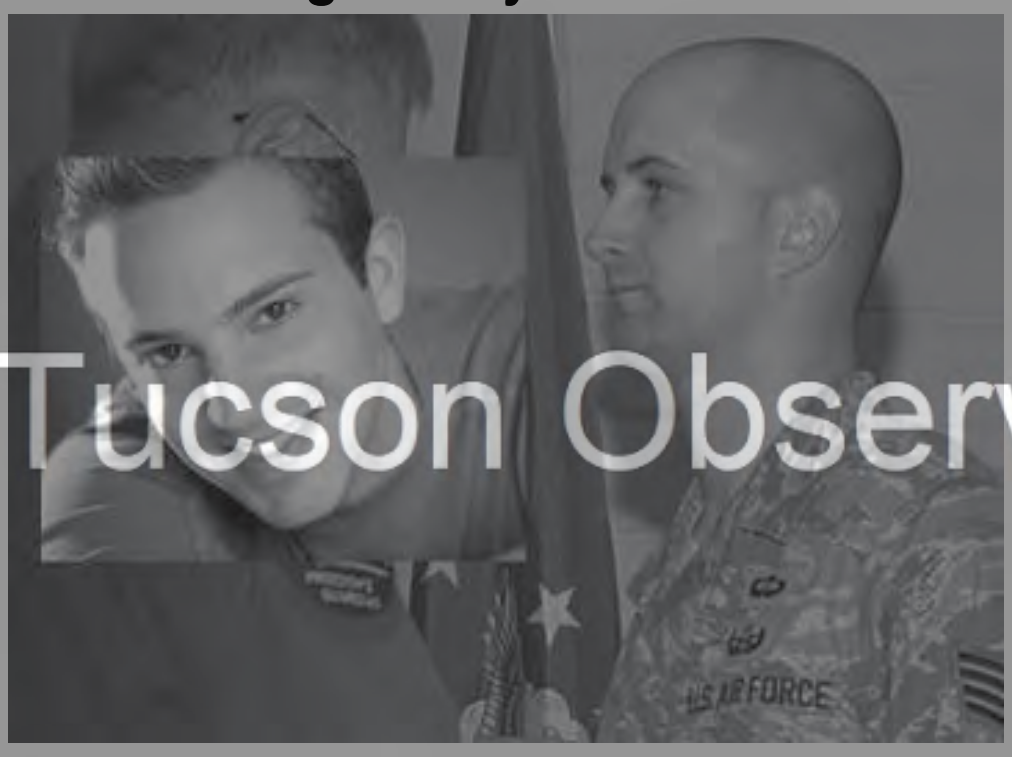
Alleged Gay Basher Found In England



LONDON (Observer Update) - An Air Force staff sergeant who is suspected of beating three gay men in New York City has been tracked down in London. Staff Sgt. Benjamin Ford was questioned by a New York Police Department Intelligence Division detective in London but has not been formally charged, advocate.com reported.

One of the three victims, Blake Hayes, a 24-year-old DJ for WPLJ FM radio, said Ford flicked a cigarette at him and his friends outside McCoy's Bar in Hell's Kitchen on September 26, then said, "Keep moving, faggot." According to police, Hayes and his friends retaliated by making fun of Ford's baldness, which resulted in an escalation when Ford pushed Hayes and punched one of the DJ's friends. "Die of AIDS, you fucking queers," Ford yelled before returning to the bar.

Police responded but did not take a report, the victims said. The NYPD Internal Affairs department is investigating the situation. Ford is an expert at defusing bombs, and he was in New York on assignment to help protect President Obama and other world leaders when Obama spoke at the United Nations. Ford said he was at the scene of the fight but insisted the alleged victims started the altercation, a source told New York Daily News.

After consulting with Hayes and his friends, the NYPD and the Manhattan prosecutor's office have agreed to let the U.S. military try Ford and punish him if he is found guilty in the attack.

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Wyoming School Board Removes Anti-Hate Banners

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WHEATLAND (Observer Update) - School board members have prohibited antidiscrimination banners because an LGBT rights group is among their sponsors, advocate.com reported.

"If this is the way one chooses, then they can lead this particular lifestyle, but I don't believe it needs to be publicly displayed in a school," Platte County School District 1 board member Lee Dunham said of the banners, according to the Wyoming Tribune Eagle.

District administrators removed the banners after parents and school board members expressed concern over the fact that the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Colorado is listed as a sponsor. The banners are part of the Anti-Defamation League's "No Place for Hate" campaign, involving a variety of activities designed to teach young people about tolerance and respecting differences; other sponsors include the David and Laura Merage Foundation and Qwest Communications. Platte County trustees this week rejected a request to put the banners back up, voting 4-3 this week to keep them down at Wheatland High School and West Elementary School.

Board members have accused the Anti-Defamation League of promoting same-sex marriage in their conservative town. "I don't believe [homosexuality] is a normal lifestyle, but I don't have anything against them," board member Joe Fabian said. He went on to blame school administrators for allowing the banners without board approval and he implied students not supportive of the banner faced ridicule.

Bruce DeBoskey, regional director for the Anti-Defamation League, says schools can't participate in the program if they don't use the banners.

"[The Anti-Defamation League] will no longer allow the program if it's not being honored and used in its fullest intent," he told the Tribune Eagle. "The [league] is extremely concerned that this whole program has been derailed by people who appear to have biases."

The schools were two of 25 in Colorado and Wyoming involved in the program.

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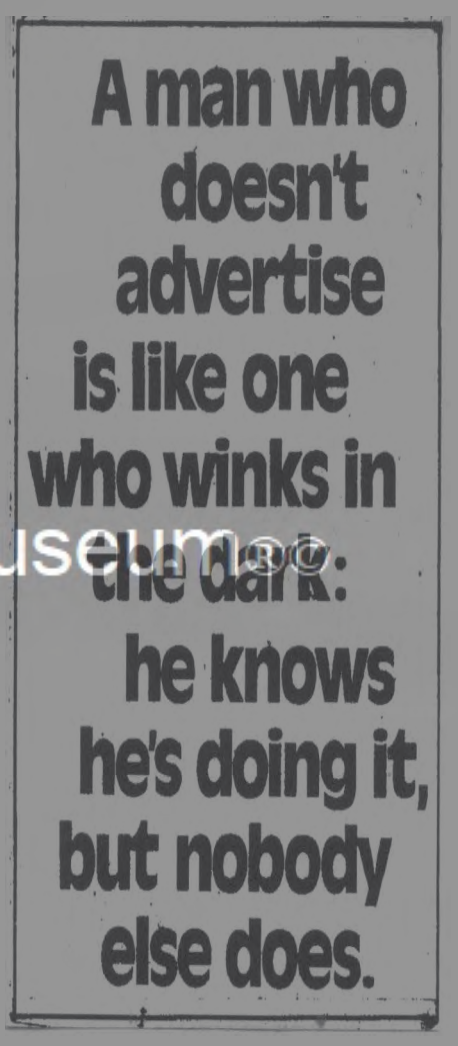

BUZZ FLASHES

Gay Marriage Opponents Push For Repeal In N.H.

CONCORD, NH (Observer Update) - On January 1, New Hampshire became the latest state to legalize gay marriage. Fifty-four gay couples married on the day the law took effect. But opponents are mounting a campaign to undo those marriages, the Washington Post reported.

Representative Alfred Baldasaro, a Republican from Londonberry, is the primary sponsor behind a bill that would repeal the law. Baldasaro testified at a House Judiciary Committee hearing on the measure.

"A man and a woman together create a family where individuals of the same gender cannot create a family," Rep. Jordan Ulery, a Republican from Hudson, testified. But Representative Ed Butler, an openly gay Democrat, urged the committee to reject the proposal. "Marriage is an incredible acknowledgement of our equality. Please don't take it away after so shortly having given us the opportunity to feel the incredibly powerful stamp of access to that word. Marriage is a powerful word."

House members are also considering a bill that would put a gay marriage ban in the state constitution. Opponents concede the Democrat-controlled Legislature is unlikely to reconsider its decision this year, but they hope to use the issue to alter the political landscape in their favor in November.

State Representative David Bates, a Republican from Windham, is behind a grassroots effort to raise the issue at town hall meetings this spring. The campaign encourages people to put a non-binding resolution calling for a vote on gay marriage before town voters. Bates said he expects a large majority of New Hampshire's towns will put the issue on the agenda.

HIV Cocktail Cuts Death Rates By Half

BOSTON, MA (Observer Update) - Studies have long proved that combination therapy vastly improves immune function in HIV-positive individuals, but a new study is also proving the AIDS cocktail is saving lives, advocate.com reported.

Specifically, a study conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston found that a cocktail of powerful AIDS drugs cut the average death rate by half in a group of HIV-positive people studied for three years. The findings were detailed in the latest issue of the journal AIDS.

The investigators noted that the cocktail, "halved the [death] rate of HIV-infected invdividuals in developed countries, and ... the absolute reduction in [death] was stronger in those with worse prognosis at the start of follow-up."

Yahoo! News reports that the team concluded that the cocktail "demonstrates the benefits of being treated even at the most advanced stages of [disease]."

Ex-Lesbian Mom Vanishes After Custody Order

MONTPELIER, VT)Observer Update) - The birth mother of a 7-year old Virginia girl has been ordered by a Vermont judge to hand over custody to the mother's former lesbian partner, the Associated Press reports.

But according to a court order the birth mother, Lisa Miller has disappeared with the child, Isabella, reported advocate.com.

Miller and Janet Jenkins were joined in a Vermont civil union in 2000. Two years later Isabella was born to Miller through artificial insemination. The couple then broke up in 2003, when Miller moved to Virginia and joined an ex-Gay ministry.

Custody was originally granted to Miller, with liberal visitation rights to Jenkins. But the Vermont court switched that custody to Jenkins after finding Miller in contempt for denying Jenkins access.

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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

Upcoming Bar Events

Saturday, January 27

WOODY'S - 9:00 p.m. Special evening with your favorite adult entertainers: Jason Pitt - Josh Griffin - Lex Sabra on the pedestal dancing for you

Friday, January 29

WOODY'S - Special benefit for Wingspan "Don't Hate - Celebrate Party". Show at 10:00 p.m. starring Jasmine White, Janee Starr, DesIraye Dimarco, Miss Leading and special guest Miss Gay Arizona 2009 T.C. Taylor

Saturday, January 30

WOODY'S - 9:00 p.m. "The Wett Party" returns starring adult entertainer Nash Lawler. Lots of DVD giveaways and Fun. Live performances at 10:30 p.m. and 12:30 a.m.

Saturday, February 6

COYOTE MOON - Anson Reign & Reigning Men Drag King Torupe.

Sunday, February 7

COYOTE MOON - Super Bowl 44

IBT'S - The Super Bowl Party

Saturday, February 13

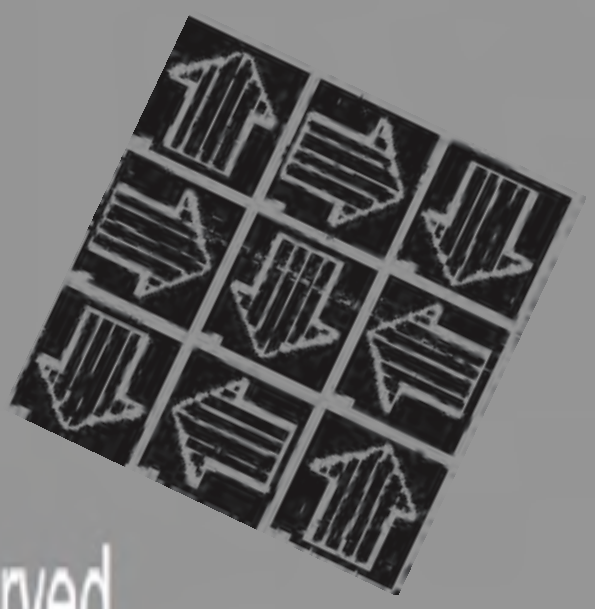
COYOTE MOON - The live band 'Too Much Information'

Sunday, February 14

IBT'S - Valentine's Day

Tuesday, February 16

IBT'S - Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras)



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HRC Names Best Places For LGBT's To Work

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The Human Rights Campaign Foundation has released its annual list of "Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality," advocate.com reported.

This year 305 companies were awarded this distinction for their employment policies and practices that include LGBT workers and their families. They include big names like Levi Strauss, Hyatt Hotels, Google, Walt Disney and Aetna.

"These companies' actions constitute tangible, significant civil rights progress. By mandating equal opportunity in hiring, ensuring equal compensation through medical and family benefits, and promoting informed work forces and equal work places, these companies light the way for advances in state and federal law," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "Corporate America continues to make progress, and federal law has to catch up."

The "Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality" distinction is awarded to businesses that scored 100% on the HRC Foundation's 2010 Corporate Equality Index. The index evaluates non-discrimination policies, benefits, diversity training and other internal resources for LGBT workers, as well as external support for LGBT consumers and job seekers. Released in early September, the 2010 Corporate Equality Index report is available online at www.hrc.org/cei.

The 305 businesses will be honored March 17 at a reception in New York.

Many of the 305 Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality businesses are featured in HRC's Buying for Equality guide. The guide provides consumers with ratings of a business's LGBT inclusiveness. Just weeks ago, HRC released the first-ever Buying for Equality iPhone application.

Olympic Panel: Gender Is A Medical Concern

MIAMI BEACH (Observer Update) - A panel of medical experts told the International Olympic Committee that gender identity among athletes should be treated as a medical concern, not one of fairness in competition, advocate.com reported.

According to The New York Times, the group met in Miami Beach, Fla., for two days to come to their conclusion. They said that athletes, particularly female athletes, who have medical disorders that give them masculine characteristics should be diagnosed and treated. They recommended that eligibility for competition be weighed on an individual basis.

Panel members said the athletes' health might be endangered if their disorders are not diagnosed and treated. "Those who agree to be treated will be permitted to participate," said Maria New, a panelist and an expert on sexual development disorders. "Those who do not agree to be treated on a case-by-case basis will not be permitted."

The recommendations ask sports authorities to send photographs of athletes to experts in order for the expert to determine if the athlete might have a sexual development disorder. The expert would then give a recommendation suggesting further testing or treatment.

Some athletes objected to the panel's conclusions. "If you start to do this, you are making a joke of the fact that there are two classifications – male and female," said Doriane Coleman, a Duke University law professor and former 800-meter runner. "They might as well open it up and have women competing with men."

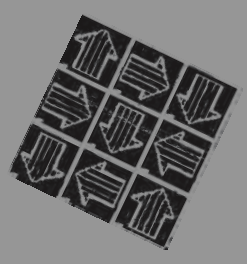
The issue of gender ambiguity among elite athletes has come to the fore after South African runner Caster Semenya's performance at the 2009 International Association of Athletics Federations championships. Caster's appearance and improvement in performance led some to question if she was indeed a woman, and she underwent gender testing, the results of which have not been released.

Indiana Gay Marriage Ban Moves Forward

INDIANAPOLIS (Observer Update) - A constitutional ban on same-sex marriage in Indiana took a step forward after a Republican-controlled Senate committee approved the measure 6-4, 365gay.com reported.

While the measure stands a chance of progressing through Indiana's full state Senate, which is currently controlled by the GOP, it is unlikely to make it through the Democrat-controlled House. According to the South Bend Tribune, the measure would add an amendment to the state's constitution banning both same-sex marriages and civil unions. But the measure is somewhat redundant as Indiana state law already forbids same-sex marriage.

"I firmly believe in the sacred definition of marriage as Indiana has always known it, as it is written in statute," said state Sen. Carlin Yoder, a Republican, who wrote the bill told the Tribune. "This is not in any way an attack on the gay and lesbian community. By doing this, we are not taking away any rights from the gay and lesbian community in Indiana."



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