

Is Defense Department Blocking DADT Vote?



Aubrey Sarvis

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The executive director of the lead group that lobbies for repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" sent a letter to President Barack Obama urging him to "reaffirm" his commitment to end the policy and charging that administration officials have been discouraging congressional action behind the scenes, reported advocate.com.

"I am very disturbed by multiple reports from Capitol Hill that your Congressional liaison team is urging some Members of Congress to avoid a vote on repeal this year," read the letter from Aubrey Sarvis, executive director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, as first reported by Ben Smith in POLITICO.

Sarvis told The Advocate that he has gotten reports from Capitol Hill staffers in both the Senate and House that representatives from the Department of Defense have asked them to hold off on taking a vote on the policy until a report on how to implement repeal is completed. The study, ordered by Defense Secretary Robert Gates in February, is due in early December.

"The administration is saying, 'Look, the working group has its task, their work is not concluded until the end of the year, and we would prefer that this not be voted on this year,'" Sarvis said.

Asked if the directive came from officials at the White House or the Defense Department, Sarvis said, "It's the Pentagon, but the Pentagon is part of the administration."

The Department of Defense was not immediately available for comment.

Sarvis said he did not know of any White House officials who had discouraged a vote since the president made a pledge to repeal the gay ban in his State of the Union address in January.

"The president has spoken, and I think those that are closest to him have not done anything that is at odds with his word," he said.

During that speech, Obama said, "This year, I will work with Congress and our military to finally repeal the law that denies gay Americans the right to serve the country they love because of who they are."

But in March, Defense secretary Robert Gates told reporters he thought it would be "risky" to move on legislative repeal before the Pentagon's working group finishes its review.

"I do not recommend a change in the law before we have completed our study," Gates said.

Asked if the White House agreed with his time line, Gates responded, "You would have to ask them, but I would tell you that my impression is that the president is very comfortable with the process that we've laid out."

Sarvis said the secretary's comments are entirely consistent with the

Gay Elder Abuse Suit Filed Against Calif. County

SAN FRANCISCO (Observer Update) - After a 20-year relationship and setting up legal documentation for him and his partner to care for each other in their final days of life, 88-year-old Clay Greene ended up financially wiped out and in the middle of a legal battle against his California county.

Greene's partner, 77-year-old Harold Scull, became ill and then was injured in a fall at the men's home in Sebastopol in April 2008 and was hospitalized. Despite their official power of attorney documents, which delegated health care responsibilities to each other, Sonoma County officials denied Greene's requests to care for and make decisions for Scull. As a result, Greene has filed a lawsuit against the county.

According to the National Center for Lesbian Rights, while Scull was in the hospital, deputy public guardians went to the men's home, took photographs, and commented on the desirability and quality of their shared furnishings, artwork, and collectibles. Though their legal docu-

ments affirmed his right to do so, county and health care professionals refused to allow Greene to assist in making medical decisions or to even visit Scull in the hospital. The county is said to have involuntarily committed Greene, who was healthy, and then placed the couple in separate nursing homes. County officials then went to court to testify that Greene was simply Clay's "roommate" and sought full rights to make financial decisions on his behalf. The court denied their request but did grant them limited access to a bank account to pay for care.

After the men had been placed in nursing homes, the county terminated the couple's lease and liquidated all of their assets without any effort to differentiate the ownership of items. According to the National Center for Lesbian Rights, which is assisting in the case, Greene was left only with a photo album put together during Scull's last three months before he died in his assigned nursing home.

reports he has gotten from the Hill, which have come from House staffers who work for members with a seat on the House Armed Services Committee and Senate staffers whose senators do not sit on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"Nobody should be surprised if there are people from DOD up on the Hill urging congress not to vote," he said. "Gates really doesn't want a vote this year, so I think they're trying to get the word to Democrats who would be receptive to not taking the vote this year."

The challenge for pro-repeal advocates, Sarvis said, is finding a way to reconcile the president's stated goal in the State of the Union with the secretary's desire to have the remainder of 2010 to finish the study. Sarvis said his organization and other groups are working to bridge that gap. Servicemembers United, a gay veterans group floated a plan earlier this year that would legislatively lock in repeal this session but respect the implementation timetable laid out by Pentagon officials.

Since the State of the Union, White House press secretary Robert Gibbs has declined to indicate whether the president would like to see Congress vote on repeal this year.

But Sarvis said the clock is ticking, since both Armed Services Committees and even the full House might vote in the next 30-45 days on the Defense authorization bill, the preferred vehicle for a repeal measure.

"The train is leaving," Sarvis said. "We could have key votes before the Memorial Day recess."

Congressman Barney Frank of Massachusetts has also displayed a heightened sense of urgency about repeal recently and even called on the White House last month to "make clear that it supports legislative action this year."

But Frank said he had heard no reports of White House officials explicitly discouraging a vote on "don't ask, don't tell."

"I've never heard that," Frank said. "I've talked to both Patrick (Murphy) and Carl (Levin) who are working on it, neither one of them have said that to me." Rep. Murphy and Sen. Levin are spearheading the repeal effort in the House and Senate respectively.

Frank also said that he has not heard from White House officials since he began prodding them to take a stand on the timing of a vote.

"I haven't talked to the White House about this," he said. "Obviously, I've been sending them public messages about how unhappy I am."

UPDATE

An Evening With David Sedaris, April 25



TUCSON (Observer Update) - Following the release of his New York Times #1 Bestselling book, "When You Are Engulfed in Flames," author David Sedaris is coming to Tucson for an evening of engaging recollections and readings at the TCC Music Hall, 260 S. Church.

With previous bestsellers "Naked, Me Talk Pretty One Day," and "Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim," and as a regular National Public Radio contributor, David Sedaris' sardonic humor and incisive social critique have made him one of NPR's most popular and humorous commentators. In 2001, he was named Humorist of the Year by Time magazine and received the Thurber Prize for American Humor.

Spend an evening with David Sedaris as he reads from his bestselling book. Tickets are \$34.50 to \$52.00 at TCC and ticketmaster ticket outlets, ticketmaster.com, and 800-745-3000.

2010 Rainbow Graduation

TUCSON (Observer Update) - This festive and intimate end-of-the-year celebration will provide personal recognition of graduating lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ), and allied seniors, as well as graduating graduate school and professional school students at The University of Arizona.

Each graduate will receive a rainbow cord and certificate of honor at the ceremony emceed by Program Director of LGBTQ Affairs, Jennifer Hoefle with opening remarks by President Shelton and a keynote address by Peri Jude Radevic, former Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and current Executive Director of the Arizona Center for Disability Law.

A reception with food and entertainment by Lucinda Holliday and Namoli Brennet will follow the ceremony! Free and open to the public.

Event Details: May 5, 6:00 - 9:00 pm, 1340 E 1st Street (at the corner of 1st Street and Highland), Tucson. For more information, Christian Bracamante, 520-696-1996.

Anti-Violence Programs Volunteer Advocate Training

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Want to lend a hand and volunteer for Wingspan's Anti-Violence Programs? The Wingspan Anti-Violence Programs provides 24hr advocacy, crisis intervention, and referral services to LGBT survivors and their allies who are affected by violence and discrimination.

Come join us at Wingspan, 430 E. 7th, at our volunteer advocate training to gain advocacy skills and learn how to assist individuals and communities affected by violence.

This training will take place at Wingspan on Saturday and Sunday, April 24th and 25th 2010. Lunch and refreshments will be provided both days.

Call Kristi Smith, (520) 624-1779 Ext. 1, for more information.

Reveille On Broadway, May 1 - 2

TUCSON (Observer Update) - It's Reveille On Broadway! Fasten your seatbelts and get ready for a wild ride down the Great White Way! Reveille Men's Chorus, celebrating its 15th anniversary, is going to take

you on a musical tour of some of the best music Broadway has to offer.

You'll be tapping your feet and humming along as Reveille performs some of your favorite songs from such musicals as Hairspray, Guys and Dolls, Pajama Game, Jersey Boys, Wizard of Oz, Avenue Q, Chicago, A Chorus Line, Grease, and Full Monty, just to name a few. Oh, and it wouldn't be a Reveille show without some parody and humor thrown in for good measure. Join the guys on Saturday May 1, 8:00pm and Sunday May 2, 3:00pm at the fabulous Temple of Music and Art! Tickets are \$10 for students/seniors, \$15 in advance, or \$20 at the door. Advance tickets available from Antigone Books at 411 N. 4th Avenue, by calling the Reveille phone at 520-304-1758, or online at reveillemenschorus.org.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Shawn Cullen, Reveille Men's Chorus is jazzed-up and excited to strut their stuff. "We're a (mostly) gay men's chorus!! This is the show Reveille was born to perform," says Mr. Cullen. After previewing their Broadway routine in Green Valley on April 5 to a standing ovation, Reveille is ready to take their fans on a journey through musical theatre in a big, BIG way! The historic Temple of Music and Art in downtown Tucson, 330 S. Scott Avenue, is the perfect setting for an evening of song and dance, and Reveille will be backed by a 10-piece orchestra for full, lush sound. These guys work hard to fulfill their mission: "Reveille Men's Chorus is dedicated to musical excellence and performs worldwide to promote human rights, diversity, and a world free of AIDS." Your attendance or donation will help Reveille to travel throughout Arizona, the United States, and even abroad! Learn more at reveillemenschorus.org.

The performances on May 1 and 2 are dedicated to the memory of Jim Gall, one of the founding fathers and first Artistic Director of Reveille Men's Chorus. Jim passed away on March 25th in Fargo, North Dakota from complications due to Alzheimer's disease. Jim was a very talented musician, singer, conductor and arranger. Reveille continues to perform his arrangements, and would never have achieved all that they have accomplished these past 15 years without his leadership, vision, musicality, and passion for life.

10th Anniversary 'Evening With Music And Friends

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Each year brings an opportunity to have fine food, wine, music, and a feel-good experience at the same time, since it all is in support of deserving projects that benefit the LGBT community. The 2010 "Evening with Music and Friends", a benefit for the annual grant-making project of the LGBT-Straight Alliance Fund, is scheduled for Friday, May 7, 2010, from 6-8:30 pm.

Tony Paniagua of KUAT will preside over a program featuring music by the jazz ensemble Uber Jam, vocals by Greg Stickroth, and guitar and vocals by Curt Beall. The \$75 ticket also includes elegant hors d'oeuvres and fine wine and participation in a celebration of the Alliance Fund's 10 years of promoting philanthropy for worthy LGBT initiatives.

Go to alliancefund.org/tickets.htm, for information about ordering tickets for the event.

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

If you are interested in offering peer support to clients, educating on HIV/AIDS and more, contact Volunteer Resources at 628-7223 or volcoord@saaaf.org

Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation



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

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Treasures For TIHAN May 22

TUCSON (Observer Update) - "Treasures for TIHAN," the signature fundraising benefit for the programs and services of TIHAN, celebrates its 13th anniversary with a spectacular event!

Join event co-chairs Tom Murray and Deb Van Sant for a sparkling evening of cocktails, great music, fantastic food, and wonderful auction items.

Advance tickets for the event are \$40 each or two for \$70, and can be purchased online from our payment options page. Tickets purchased on the day of the event will be \$50. The value of food and services received in return for each ticket purchase is \$30.

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TIHAN, Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network, is a volunteer-based, nonprofit organization focused on mobilizing the resources of faith communities to respond compassionately to those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and to promote awareness and the prevention of HIV/AIDS. For more information, contact TIHAN at (520) 299-6647 or scott@tihan.org.

LGBT Jewish Inclusion Project Poker Tournament April 25

The LGBT Jewish Inclusion Project invites you to a "Chai Roller" Poker Tournament, Sunday, April 25 at the Masonic Lodge.

Game times are 6pm and 9pm.

UPDATE

Come and join us for fun, food, entertainment, and your chance to win prizes, including 3 days and 2 night stay in Santa Fe or Sedona, AND a weekend getaway in Rocky Point Mexico.

Tickets are available for a suggested donation of \$36, seating is limited to the first 104 players per game. If you love poker, please join us! Let the cards fly. and don't forget to "go all in." To make your RSVP and donate, go to www.jewishtucson.org/poker.

The proceeds of this event benefit the LGBT Jewish Inclusion Project, Wingspan, and the UA Pride Alliance. Sponsored by: The Poker Pub of Tucson, (www.thepokerpub.com), and Congregation Ner Tamid, a spiritually vibrant and inclusive congregation, (www.nertamid.homestead.com).

Event Details: Apr 25, 6:00pm - 12:00am, The Masonic Lodge, 1944 E. Allen Rd. For more information, contact Marc Paley, Coordinator, 520-577-9393 X1.

Have You Heard Of Jell-OH! Wrestling?



TUCSON (Observer Update) - The Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF) will host its longest running fundraising event- the 23rd Annual Reno Gannon Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza and Benefit Auction on Sunday, May 2, 2010 at Tucson Electric Park.

Date: Sunday, May 2, 2010
Location: Tucson Electric Park
Time: Doors open at 3:00pm; show begins at 4:00pm.
Event Cost: \$20.00 (must be 21 to enter)
Contact: 520-628-7223
Tickets: Can be purchased at any of the locations below or online at www.jello-wrestling.org.

This event raises money on-line with the help of wrestlers who collect sponsorships and also with a live auction at the event. It's Tucson's zaniest event and a must-see for everyone (over the age of 21!). To purchase tickets, visit the website at www.jello-wrestling.org or visit one of the locations below. We recommend getting your tickets now before they are all sold out.

- SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Ave.
- WOODY'S, 3710 N. Oracle
- IBT's, 616 N. 4th Ave.
- THE BIZ, 2900 E. Broadway
- Colors 5305 E. Speedway
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Event Details:

Event: 23rd Annual Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza and Benefit Auction



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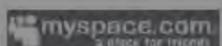
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In Reversal, AF To Discharge Lesbian

WASHINGTON, DC - Reversing an earlier decision, the Air Force said Monday it intends to discharge a lesbian officer who remained in the military despite openly declaring her homosexuality, the McClatchy newspapers reported.

An Air Force general earlier this year concluded that Lt. Robin R. Chaurasiya should not be discharged, saying she had declared her sexual orientation for the purpose of avoiding military service.

But after Chaurasiya spoke publicly about that decision, the Air Force announced a further review. On Monday, Air Force officials told Chaurasiya that a more senior officer, Gen. Raymond E. Johns, Jr., reversed the earlier decision and recommended she be honorably discharged.

"I am kind of heartbroken," Chaurasiya said. "I felt my situation was hinting at changes. I really thought I would be able to lead the way for a more equal military."

Currently stationed at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, Chaurasiya plans to return to her home in Chicago

after she is discharged.

In a statement, the Air Force said its Air Mobility Command recommended Chaurasiya be discharged. A final decision will be made by Air Force Secretary Michael Donley.

The reversal came as the military adapts to new guidelines concerning the removal of gay service members. About 13,000 service members have been discharged since a 1993 law imposed a ban on gays who serve openly in the military.

However, Defense officials are studying ways to end the ban. President Obama has called for an end to the ban on gays.



EON Is Happening

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Eon has been serving the LGBTQ and straight-allied youth community in one form or another for 22 years. But over the past few months, Eon has blossomed. "We've taken great strides to rejuvenate our programs, our delivery, and - yes - our style," says Khara Ellasante, Youth and Family Programs Manager.

Their work has paid off! Since January, participation jumped 30% from the previous quarter to an average of 92 unduplicated youth per month using the Lounge for groups, social events, and hanging out. In addition to an expanded online presence, Eon has increased its efforts to reach out to other non-profit organizations, youth programs, and schools. "We just finished a two-week long bicycle building workshop with BICAS and will have a 'Day of Silence' event with Catalina High this week," reports Stephanie Arendt, Youth Outreach Specialist.

"Over the past few months Eon as a whole has flourished," proclaims Youth Outreach Specialist, Zami Callahan, "Our dedicated staff has a broad array of skills. We've been able to widen our outreach efforts and attract even more fabulous, empowered youth."

By hosting trainings for a variety of service providers and health professionals, we can create long-lasting change for LGBTQ youth in the broader community."

In March, Eon youth and staff, along with representatives from Southern Arizona Aids Foundation (SAAF) and the University of Arizona Pride Alliance, held a panel for over 40 TUSD school nurses. Participants indicated the panel gave them a greater understanding of the unique struggles LGBTQ youth face, of how to help LGBTQ students in their schools, and of how to create a safer environment for youth in the years to come.

While making waves in the community, Eon is making a splash online. Last month they launched a new webpage specifically dedicated to Eon events (www.wingspan.org/eon). "We have resurrected our Facebook and Myspace pages which now feature photos from our latest happenings and information on upcoming events. Since the page started in January, Eon on Facebook has gathered over 225 fans and followers. Our Myspace and Causes page membership continue to grow," notes Arendt.

A significant number of youth coming to Eon for the first time read about The Lounge and Eon's programs online. Family and friends of LGBTQ youth frequently use Eon's sites for information, support, and resources.

"I talked to a college student a few weeks ago whose best friend is gay and was on the verge of committing suicide," said Arendt. "She told me she's trying to be a strong ally and to help him accept himself, but she didn't know how. She went online and found Eon. And I was able to assist her in getting help for her friend." Arendt beamed.

The success of Eon depends not just on what they do online or in the community, but on the youth that they serve. Dale (name has been changed) has been coming to Eon since he was 15, and Eon staff have shared in his struggles and successes for over five years. He is one of the 47 youth who accessed Eon's Homeless Youth Project (HYP) in March, receiving food, bus passes and hygiene items to help him make ends meet. In a given month, as many as two-thirds of Eon's youth access HYP resources. By providing basic needs services, HYP supports the efforts of homeless youth to gain stabilized housing and independence.

"HYP's collaboration with local providers such as the 'OutShine' LGBT transitional living program and the 'iTEAM' project provides critical housing and supportive care for these young people who would not access traditional providers out of fear of rejection," adds Kevin Jackson, HYP Coordinator.

While Dale waits to be accepted in transitional housing and looks for stable employment, he's coming to the Eon Lounge almost every day for on-going peer and staff support and, of course, a little couch-surfing. Like many of the Eon youth, he's taking an active role in planning Queer Prom, one of Eon's next big social events. And Dale is working on a story to share during the AIDS Candlelight Memorial next month.

Youth like Dale, a committed team of staff and volunteers, and support from the community make Eon Southern Arizona's comprehensive program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and straight-allied youth.

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Our Story: A Gay Couple, Torn Apart By DOMA

by GLAD.org

BOSTON (Observer Update) - Niles and Thiago da Silva met on a Sunday morning in 2002 at the Quincy Center T stop just outside of Boston, 365Gay.com reported.

They struck up a conversation, had a lot to talk about, and agreed to get coffee together in Boston. Coffee turned into lunch, lunch turned into a hike, a hike turned into more coffee, which turned into dinner. They were engaged six months later and legally married in Massachusetts in 2004.

"We knew from the beginning that we were soulmates," says Thiago. "We both found something in the other person that was special and different from any other person we had dated in the past."

Now, struggling to find a way to stay together before Thiago's visa expires next year, it is one of the only things in their lives that is still certain.

Originally from New Mexico, Niles moved to Boston ten years ago to take a job in finance. Around the same time, Thiago came to the city from Brazil to learn English. He fell in love with the city and with Niles and decided to build a life here.

The federal government helps keep binational families together by letting U.S. citizens sponsor non-citizen spouses for a marriage-based "green card," which gives immigrant spouses permanent resident status. Green card holders aren't U.S. citizens, but can get a Social Security number, can work, and can get a driver's license.



But Niles can't sponsor Thiago for a green card any more than he could a stranger walking down the street. Because of DOMA the federal government sees them as strangers—not as a married couple together for nearly a decade. A green card simply isn't an option for them. To stay together when Thiago's visa expires next year they may be forced to leave the country.

"If we were an opposite-sex couple Thiago could apply for a green card as my legal spouse—which he is. But in the eyes of the federal government he is no one to me," says Niles. "It makes me feel like my country doesn't really care about me."

DOMA is a costly and dangerous double standard for Niles and Thiago—costly because

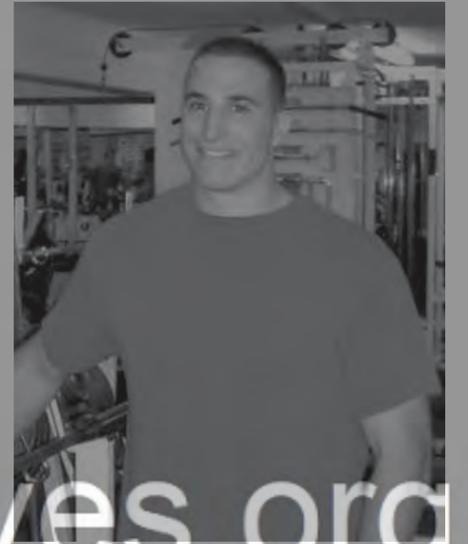
in leaving the country they will leave behind the stability of Niles' job. And dangerous because they will also be forced to leave behind the security of the health insurance they both receive through Niles' employer. Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in his early 20s, Thiago needs careful medical supervision and daily care. Twice he has had to spend up to three weeks in the hospital for medical problems related to his MS. Paying for this care is only possible because of Niles' job and his health insurance.

"We know we will get through this because we love each other and because we have support from our families and friends," says Niles. "We understand each other and we share our lives and dreams together. But more and more our lives and dreams are at the mercy of DOMA."

GLAD is currently challenging

Section 3 of the federal Defense of Marriage Act in court. They also seek to educate legislators, the media, and the general public about the harm DOMA causes same-sex couples and their families. To that end, GLAD is asking couples, and individuals who have lost a same-sex spouse, to submit stories about their relationships and the negative impact that DOMA has on their lives.

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COMMENTARY . . .

by Deb Price

Justice Stevens A Bold Ally For Gays

In 2000, Justice John Paul Stevens powerfully dissented from the Supreme Court's 5-4 decision allowing the Boy Scouts of America to ban an exceptional young man — an Eagle Scout — from being a scout leader simply because he was openly gay.

Blasting the majority's reasoning as "mind-boggling" and "far-fetched," Stevens warned that the court was in effect creating a "constitutional shield" for anti-gay policies and burdening all openly gay Americans with a "symbol of inferiority." In a stirring finale, he wrote, "If we would guide by the light of reason, we must let our minds be bold."

Now retiring, Stevens, who turns 90 on April 20, will quietly walk off the national stage as little known to most Americans as the day he was appointed by President Ford in 1975. Tourists once shooed the justice out of the way as they photographed his court's handsome facade.

But gay people and our many millions of allies should pause to salute Stevens for the many bold, intelligent moves he made to ensure that the basic constitutional rights of gay Americans have begun to be recognized and protected.

As my co-author Joyce Murdoch and I pieced together for "Courting Justice: Gay Men and Lesbians v. the Supreme Court," Stevens continually prodded the court to treat us as equal citizens, using his votes in the court's private conferences, the power to assign the writing of key gay rights rulings, and his own public statements to advance the cause of



Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens

fairness:

• In 1986, he dissented from the court's *Bowers v. Hardwick* ruling, in which a shaky but devastating five-justice majority upheld Georgia's sodomy law. "The principle that 'all men are created equal' ... must surely mean that every free citizen has the same interest in 'liberty.' ... (T)he homosexual and the heterosexual have the same interest in deciding how he will live his own life, and, more narrowly, how he will conduct himself in his personal and voluntary associations with his companions."

• Rather than grabbing the spotlight by assigning himself to write the gay rights breakthrough decisions in *Romer v. Evans* in 1996 and *Lawrence v. Texas* in 2003, Stevens wisely tapped Justice Anthony Kennedy, a strategic move likely intended to preserve fragile majorities by keeping Kennedy and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor onboard. Those legal blockbusters recognized that gay Americans do indeed have constitutionally protected privacy and equal protection rights.

What might have happened if those cases had gone the other way? It's horrifying to imagine. Without those legal landmarks, gay Americans would still be smeared with a taint of criminality, and the anti-gay industry would have shifted into high gear to write Colorado-style amendments into other state constitutions so that state and local officials would be powerless to adopt any sort of gay rights laws.

• In 1998, when the Supreme Court opted not to review a lower court ruling upholding an anti-gay Cincinnati ordinance, Stevens released an unusual statement that essentially said not to misread the step as undercutting *Romer*, reminding everyone that turning away a case "is not a ruling on the

merits."

Stevens' retirement is like saying goodbye to a beloved grandfather who for decades did his best to protect you without drawing particular attention to himself. Left as basic gay allies on the court are Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Steadfastly gay-friendly David Souter was succeeded by Sonia Sotomayor, who, though still untested, has sparked optimism among gay rights attorneys. Despite writing the *Romer* and *Lawrence* decisions, Kennedy remains a question mark.

Heeding his own admonition to boldly go where the light of reason pointed, Stevens illuminated the nation's path toward full equality for those of us who are gay. If our next justice follows in Stevens' footsteps, the rights of all Americans will be in good hands.

(Deb Price of the *Detroit News*, from which this is reprinted from, and writes the first nationally syndicated column on gay issues.)



Tucson Observer Archives

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Obama Calls Woman Behind Gay Partner Hospital Memo

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - President Obama called Janice Langbehn - the inspiration behind his hospital memo - while attending a Democratic fundraiser in Miami, Florida, the Miami Herald reported.



Janice Langbehn and Lisa Pond

Langbehn's story of being blocked by hospital officials from seeing her dying partner, Lisa Pond, moved the president to sign a directive ordering the Department of Health and Human Services to establish new rules that would prevent hospitals from denying visitation rights to the partners of gay men and lesbians, reported On Top Magazine.

Obama made the call from Air Force One during his return trip to Washington, D.C. "Of course you can guess that I am blown away that the White House was watching our story and would act on it," Langbehn wrote to the paper. "This is Lisa's legacy right here - no one should die alone - no matter who they love."

Both Langbehn and the couple's children were barred by Jackson Memorial Hospital from being by Pond's side as she slipped into a coma and died in 2007. Officials dismissed the couple's advanced healthcare directive. Langbehn challenged the hospital's policy, but a federal court ruled against her last September. Obama

said he was outraged by Langbehn's story.

The president's memo prohibits hospitals that accept federal funding from Medicare or Medicaid, the government's elderly and poor health care programs, from discriminating on the basis of a variety of characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity, and requires hospitals to honor patients' wishes of who can make medical decisions on their behalf.

Gay rights groups called the memo a small but significant contribution towards equality in the absence of the legal right to marry in most jurisdictions. Last week, Jackson Memorial announced it was changing its long-standing policy that banned gay partners from visiting their loved ones.



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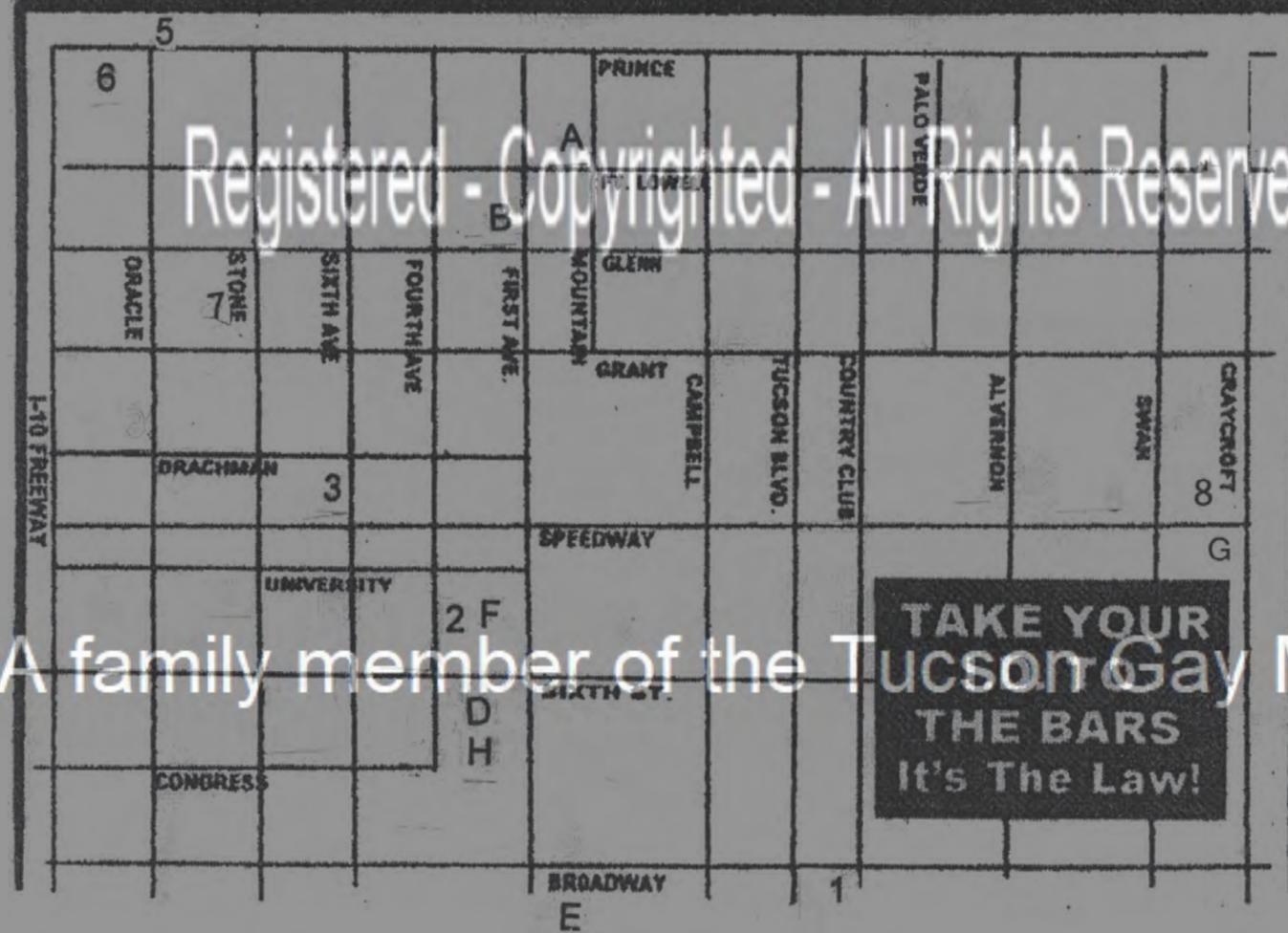
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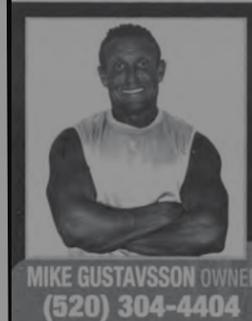
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SOUTHERN ARIZONA AIDS FOUNDATION (SAAF), 375 S. EUCLID. Office Hours 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. Direct services and emotional support for persons with and affected by HIV. Anonymous HIV testing and support groups available. Prevention education programs. 628-SAAF (7223). World wide web: <http://www.saaaf.org>. VOLUNTEERS WELCOME.

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P.F.L.A.G. - Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays - is a support group available to anyone who has a son, daughter or friend who is Gay. Call 360-3795 or write P.O. Box 36264, Tucson, AZ 85740-6264. All replies confidential.

YOUNG AND GAY?

GLBT Youth 23 and under, meet Tucson for sharing, support and information. You are not alone. For more info call Wingspan, 624-1779.

Start getting more out of life with TUCSON PRIME TIMERS. We're the local chapter of Prime Timers Worldwide, the preeminent social organization for mature gay and bi men as well as younger (21+) men who enjoy their company. Each month we sponsor a wide range of dining events, cultural enrichment activities, parties, meetings, bowling, day trips, picnics, tours and much more. Visitors are always welcome. For info call our message phone 520-743-9514 Visit our website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

TUCSON INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

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

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

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

SOURCES UNLIMITED, a Lesbian & Gay referral service. Business and individual listings are free of charge. All information available to anyone just simply by asking. 322_5655. Leave message. TucsonSources@aol.com

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BEARS OF THE OLD PUEBLO - a social club for bears and bigger, more robust men (and of course, those who prefer their company). For more info, Call the Bears Hotline (520)829-0117 or write P.O. Box 43910, Tucson, AZ 85733-3910 of visit our website at www.botop.com All are welcome to our general meetings/potlucks on the 2nd Friday of every month, at 3202 E. 1st St. (the "Ward 6" Office Bldg.) Just south of Speedway & East of Country Club. PotLuck Dinner begins at 6:30 and the monthly meeting follows at 7:15 p.m.

LESBIAN AND GAY AL-ANON- Affected by someone's drinking? Meeting every Tuesday 8:45 to 9:45 p.m. at Lambda Center, 2940 E. Thomas, Phoenix. Ellie 581-8850 or Ronn 968-2384.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE GROUP - Outreach to Gay and Lesbian people in Arizona. Meets monthly. Write to P.O. Box 893, Phoenix, AZ 85001 or call Eddy Walters, (602)371-1102

T-Squares, Tucson's Gay & Lesbian square dance club, dances Tuesdays 6:30_9 pm at the Cornerstone Fellowship Social Hall, 2902 N. Geronimo Ave (Northwest of 1st Ave & Glenn St). No experience needed, no partner required! For more information contact Barb at 886-0716, or visit www.azgaydance.org.

LIGHTNING LIGHTING will provide lighting for AIDS and related benefits at no charge. For more info call Adrienne at 889-7298.

COME EXPLORE YOUR SPIRITUALITY! St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church offers a variety of Gay and Lesbian groups and services for the spiritually minded. Come meet the Family! For more information call Debbie 579-9827 or David 323-7943.

LESBIAN/GAY WRITERS: Workshop at 7:00 p.m. third Wednesday of every month. Read and critique current projects. Network and support. For info call 325-4737.

DESERT VOICES, Tucson's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Straight Chorus, has been singing songs of pride, hope and laughter for 20 seasons. Check out our website at www.desertvoices.org, or call (520)791-9662 for information about upcoming concerts or how to join.

Join the LESBIAN & GAY PUBLIC AWARENESS PROJECT. In Tucson write Awareness Project, 3661 N. Campbell Ave. #365, Tucson, AZ 85719.

AA Meeting with HIV/AIDS focus, Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., Wingspan Annex, 425 E. 7th Street. All alcoholics welcome.

MEN'S SOCIAL NETWORK: Social organization for men of all ages. Building an extended Gay family in Tucson. Monthly social potluck gatherings the first Saturday of each month and almost weekly social activities. Call 207-5336 for information and a newsletter.

CARE TEAMS ARE AVAILABLE to offer support to people living with HIV/AIDS. The Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN) offers trained, compassionate and committed volunteers to provide services including friendly visits, light housekeeping, assistance with meals, shopping, errands, transportation and companionship for medical appointments, and respite care for primary care givers. No judgement or proselytizing - we are here to be of service. For information call Scott at 299-6647.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT SPORTS TEAMS and updates on Gay Games, contact TEAM ARIZONA at their website: teamarizona.org

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GLBT, Tucson's Gay and Lesbian business networking group holds regular meetings the third Thursday of every month. Call 615-6436 for more info. www.tucsonglbtchamber.org

TUCSON PRIDE, INC. meets on the second Wednesday at Braun P.C. located at 6125 E. Grant Road at 6pm. Tucson Pride produces the following events each year: Pride Week; Pride In The Desert and Pride On Parade. For more information please call 622-3200 or visit their website at www.tucsonpride.org

LEARN TO BE A LISTENING FRIEND Unique Hospital Volunteer Program teaches listening skills to Volunteers who provide a safe/compassionate environment to at_risk patients. Training every 6 weeks. 694-7063.

ANONYMOUS HIV COUNSELING AND TESTING is available through the Pima County Health Department at sites throughout Tucson, Very Gay Friendly. For more information or to make an appointment call 791-7676.

SMART (Self Management And Recovery Training) a free non-12-step self_help alternative for people working to overcome addictive and other emotional problems meets in Tucson Monday thru Thursdays at different locations. For more information about SMART, contact Jennifer at 838_3975.

THEATER / DINNER / MOVIES / ETC! Nonsmoking Lesbian Network meets every month. If you'd like to meet women 50+ (flexible) and socialize in a smoke-free environment, please call or email: 888-8010 'til 9pm, or joycesmth1@aol.com. The group dines OUT! and attends shows, movies, comedy events, etc. Now in our 23rd year, 7th in Tucson.

SOUTHERN ARIZONA GENDER ALLIANCE (SAGA). The Southwest's largest transgender and gender-diversity advocacy organization. Speakers and panelists available. General meetings monthly on the 1st Mondays at 7pm; Desert Girlz (MTF Support) meets 2nd Mondays at 7pm; Desert Boyz (FTM Support) meets 3rd Tuesdays at 7pm. Also serving partners, youth, intersex, service providers and allies. Call (520)624-1779 x26 for more info.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES. Not a dating club. Discreet. Meetings every Monday evening. Call for more info. APEX (Arizona Power Exchange) 602-415_1123. 24-hr multi-choice message including information, calendar and location.

ARIZONA AIDS POLICY ALLIANCE (AZAPA) seeks to educate legislators and citizens about sound AIDS policy. For more information write AZAPA, 6523 N. 14th St., #112, Phoenix, AZ 85014 or call 602-279-4805.

DESERT DOMINION, whose focus is providing information and education for people interested in the BDSM lifestyle, meets monthly for group discussion and social events. Visit our web site <http://www.desertdominion.org> or call (520)792-6424

SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS. Starting this February, the Tucson Rape crisis Center will be providing free confidential group services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender survivors of all manner of sexual assault. Interested persons please call Mirto Stone, MSW, at 327-1171 (if unavailable leave message with phone number.

GLSEN - Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network meets first Thursday of every month at 4:30pm at Wingspan, 425 E.7th Street. 743-4800.

SAA (Sex Addicts Anonymous) has 5 meetings a week in Tucson. People who wish to stop their compulsive sexual behavior, please call (520) 745-0775 for current information.

TUCSON GREATER SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION. Interested? Call Kelly Quinn, (520)906-0669 and or Mona Garcia 256-8728.

LUTHERANS CONCERNED - Tucson chapter for Gay/Lesbian Lutherans meets 3rd Sunday, 5:30 p.m. each month at Lutheran Church of the Foothills, 5102 N. Graycroft Rd. For information visit www.lctucson.org or write: Lutherans Concerned/Tucson, P.O. Box 40702, Tucson, AZ 85717-0702.

REVELLE MEN'S CHORUS rehearses Monday evenings 7_10pm at the Historic Y, corner of University Blvd. And 5th Ave. Join us!! Call 304-1758 for more info.

LGBT SUPPORT GROUP FOR VICTIM/SURVIVORS OF Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Hate Crimes, Bias Acts, Harassment. Call Megan at Wingspan, 624-1779, ext. 116. Services are free.

MEN'S HIKING CLUB - A peer-run MEN's outdoor club for hiking, biking, camping, boating etc, is now up and running in the Tucson area. To join, go to SAGE-Tucson-subscribe @yahoogroups.com. See you on the trails.

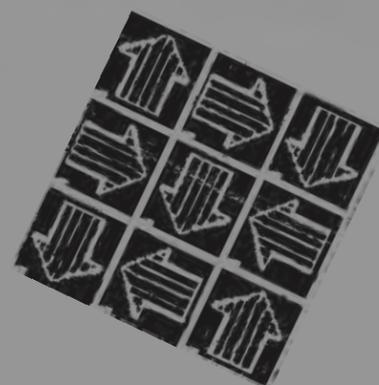
MEN'S KINK DISCUSSION GROUP (Open to all who identify as male and are 18 or older) meets 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at Desert Dominion, 3843 E. 37th Street, Tucson, AZ. (Map available at www.desertdominion.org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required. Mondays, 6:30pm at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street. This is an open meeting of Narcotics Anonymous - all are welcome. For more info call Bernie W.: 406-0740

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

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP for Lesbians, Bisexuals, Trans, Queer, Women. Meets Mondays (6:00 - 7:30pm) at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street, Tucson, AZ 85701. For more info, please contact Brenda Casey, LMSW 520-694-0247 or

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP Sponsored by TMC Hospice and Valor Hospice Care. 1st & 3rd Thursdays 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4831 E. 22nd Street, Tucson. Located one quarter mile east of Swan on 22nd St. For more information please contact Steve Ross- Valor Hospice 615-3996; Karla Brockie - TMC Hospice 269-9573 or karla.brockie@tmcaz.com

LGBT Buddhist Meditation Group. Join us for two 20 minute silent sitting meditations, and reading from Buddhist Spiritual text and discussion. Bring a friend and a pillow or cushion. Takes place every Sunday from 10-11:30AM at 3 Jewels, 314 E. 6th St. Donations accepted. for more info. 323-2293.



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Photo from 2009 memorial in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, taken by Mihaela Bacalu

DAILY BAR CALENDAR

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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 - Closed for employee training.

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 and Game Night all night long. Play Wii, beer pong and pool with the staff.

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 8pm

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.

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. Happy Hour 5-8pm. Wild Wednesday 18+ Party with DJ White Shadow spinning the hottest Hip Hop, R&B and top 40 remix dance of today. 21+ NO COVER. 18+ \$8 Cover.

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 Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Bar open 8pm-close. Service Industry Employee Special All Day Long - \$1 off all drinks except schnapps and draft. Different Themed Underwear Party 9pm-close with \$1.00 off for those who participate (excl. Schnapps and Draft). Retro 80s & 90s Dance with DJ Clint 9 til close..

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-8pm. Y-NOT Karaoke 9pm-2am with Mecos pouring the best drinks in town. Come out and play.

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 Skyy Cape Cods and \$4 Skyy Cosos.

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. Happy Hour 5-8 pm. GoGo Fridays with 2-4-1 drinks for the ladies til midnight. Catch Shorty spinning the hottest Hip Hop, R&B and Top 40 remix dance of today.

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 piano & vocal sounds of Susan Artemis 6-9 p.m.;

SATURDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm - 2am. Latin night with Latin Drag Show the 1st, 3rd and 4th Saturdays of the month. DJ Dmenace spinnin' the best Cumbias, Salsa & Merengue. \$3 pitchers and \$2 Tequila shotz all night long!

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.

PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR ADVERTISERS

Bar Calendar Specials

SATURDAY, APRIL 24

COYOTE MOON PUB - 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Tea Dance with guest DJ Sparky.

WOODY'S - Fundraiser for Woody's Jell-OH wrestling team. Drink specials, Jell-o shots, raffle and White Shorts Pool Dunking!

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28

WOODY'S - Underwear Night 9 to close. \$1 off your drink if you're in your undies.

SUNDAY, MAY 2

WOODY'S - Jell-O After Party. Brink in your Jell-O ticket stub for \$1 off your drink or bottled Beer.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 5

WOODY'S - Celebrate Cinco de Mayo here. \$3.50 Cuervo Margaritas, \$2 Tecate longnecks. \$2.75 Coronas plus special Taco Buffet.

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Aussie Olympian Announces He's Gay



SYDNEY (Observer Update) - Daniel Kowalski, winner of four medals in Atlanta's 1996 Olympic Games, came out to an Australian newspaper.

Kowalski, 34, told The Sunday Age that he was "tired of living a lie" and hoped to inspire young gay people. In Atlanta, he was the first swimmer in 92 years to win medals in all of the freestyle events.

He told The Age, "I felt really compelled to do it because it's very tough to live a closeted existence. On

the sporting side, I lost to some amazing champions, so I'm not for a second saying that this is the reason I didn't win," he said. "(But) I often wonder if the lack of self-confidence and lack of identity in many ways held me back from reaching my potential."

Kowalski urged other gay athletes to come out, saying, "There'll be hard times but you surround yourself with great, supportive people who love you for you and you'll be OK."

Drew Barrymore, Wanda Sykes Honored At 21st Annual GLAAD Media Awards

LOS ANGELES (Observer Update) - Adam Lambert, the cast of Glee, Johnny Weir, Sofia Vergara, Eric Dane, Chaz Bono, George Takei, Constance McMillen, Candis Cayne, Wilson Cruz, RuPaul and Super Bowl-winning NFL linebacker Scott Fujita were among the celebrities who joined the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) as it honored Drew Barrymore, Wanda Sykes and the best in film, television and journalism last night at the 21st Annual GLAAD Media Awards in Los Angeles.

The GLAAD Media Awards elevate and promote fair, accurate and inclusive stories of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues, people and allies that have increased awareness, understanding and respect for the lives of LGBT people.

The GLAAD Media Awards also fund GLAAD's work to amplify stories of LGBT people and issues that build support for equality.

Dear Obama: Go Beyond Gay Partners' Hospital Rights

By LZ Granderson

Dear President Obama: One of things I've long admired about you is the amount of care you show toward your family, especially your wife, Michelle.

From reading about the days of you picking her up in your car with the hole in the floor to seeing the two of you smile at each other during the Inaugural Ball, I don't think Danielle Steele herself could have penned a more romantic American love story.

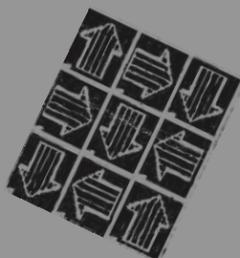
With each gaze in her direction, it is clear to those around that Michelle is your heart, your light, your soulmate. If she ever needed you for anything, you would be right by her side.

The memo asking the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a rule that would prevent hospitals from denying visitation privileges to gay and lesbian partners is a positive step. But keep in mind a lot of military families in this position are still unfairly isolated and punished because of "don't ask, don't tell."

Try imagining Michelle hurt and alone and you don't know where she is and are unable to get any information - because you should not exist. Or worse, imagine Michelle never coming home again and no one knows you're the one person in the world who should be contacted. Explain why. Terrible thoughts I know, but for the families of deployed soldiers this scenario is not an uncomfortable hypothetical, it's a heart-wrenching reality.

Like hospital visitation, 'don't ask, don't tell' isn't a gay rights issue, it's a human rights issue.

(LZ Granderson is a writer for espn.com and this is reprinted from cnn.com, opinion section)



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