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# 10 facts About America's LGBT Population

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - As the Williams Institute celebrates a decade of gathering data to inform the nation about the LGBT population, advocate.com reports the organization shares 10 facts that were uncovered about gay people, from our diversity to our impact on the federal deficit:

1. 9 million LGBT people live in the U.S., 3.8 % of the adult population.

2. LGBT people are racially, ethnically, and geographically diverse: 1 in 4 are people of color and same-sex couples have identified themselves on the Census in 99% of U.S. counties.

3. A substantial percentage of LGBT people are raising children: 1 in 5 same-sex couples and 6% of children in foster care are being raised by LGB people.

4. LGB people are serving in the Armed Forces: 71,000 are currently serving, and there are over 1 million LGB veterans in the U.S.

5. 70,000 same-sex couples have gotten married in the U.S.; another 90,000 have entered into civil unions and domestic partnerships.

6. The annual divorce rate for same-sex couples and different-sex married couples is similar – about 2%.

7. LGBT people are not more affluent. Gay men earn 10% to 23% less, on average, than heterosexual men. Children of same-sex couples are twice as likely to live in poverty.

8. Rates of hate crimes and employment discrimination against LGBT people are similar to or higher than for other protected groups. Until the Williams Institute, no one analyzed this data on a per capita basis, taking into account the smaller size of the LGBT population.

9. "Don't ask, don't tell" has cost taxpayers over $500 million since it started being enforced in 1994.

10. If all 50 states and the federal government recognized marriage for same-sex couples, the federal budget would benefit by over $1 billion each year.

# HUD Launches 'Live Free' Campaign

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - Though federal fair housing laws don't protect against anti-LGBT discrimination, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has launched a campaign to protect against discrimination on the basis of gender stereotypes, reports advocate.com.

The effort is part of HUD's "Live Free" campaign that will run through the year in print ads and online initiatives. Passed in 1968, the Fair Housing Act prohibits landlords and home sellers from discriminating against people based on characteristics such as race, religion, sex, and disability. "Housing discrimination against someone who is LGBT may, in certain circumstances, violate the Act's existing provisions, including its prohibition against gender discrimination," HUD officials said in a release.

John Trasviña, HUD's assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity, said in the release that the agency is working to finalize a rule prohibiting sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in its programs.

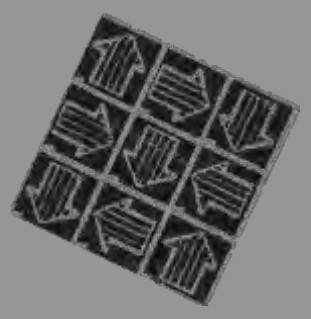
# Discharge Dropped For Bed- Sharing Sailor

CHARLESTON (Observer Update) - A sailor who was notified he would be discharged under "don't ask, don't tell" for falling asleep in the same bed as his colleague will be able to keep his post, reports advocate.com.

Petty Officer Second Class Stephen Jones, stationed at the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command in Charleston, S.C., was notified that the Navy had decided to rescind his discharge orders. According to earlier reports, he fell asleep in the same bed as Petty Officer Bryan McGee after the two spent the evening watching television. Jones's roommate walked in to find them lying on the bed, though both Jones and McGee contend that they were both clothed and that they did not engage in any sexual conduct. The situation made the roommate feel uncomfortable, prompting him to move to another room the next day.

McGee and Jones were originally to be punished by a nonjudicial procedure, which McGee agreed to, but Jones did not. This prompted proceedings to discharge him. Jones, 21, received his discharge orders in March for "willful failure to exhibit professional conduct," said his lawyer, Gary Myers. A Navy spokesman said last month that Jones did not come under fire for sexual behavior, but he said it was considered a violation of the Command Instruction to share a bed in Navy barracks.

Servicemembers United executive director Alexander Nicholson commended the Navy's decision in a statement. "We strongly suspected that his command was trying to find a round about way to discharge Jones because it suspected him of being gay, and we simply were not willing to stand by and watch a new version of 'don't ask, don't tell' emerge under the new label of 'unprofessional conduct,'" he said.



# Little Impact On Military From Repeal of DADT Policy

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - Defense Secretary Robert Gates reassured U.S. warfighters in Iraq that allowing gays to serve openly in the military will have little impact on the armed forces, an argument largely echoed by the top leaders of the Army, Air Force, Marines and Navy, reported the AP on 365Gay.com.

Visiting troops at Camp Liberty in Baghdad, Gates was asked when repeal of the 17-year-old policy commonly known as "don't ask, don't tell" would occur and what its effect would be. "My guess is you won't see much change at all because the whole thrust of the training is you're supposed to go on treating everybody like you're supposed to be treating everybody now, with dignity, respect and discipline," Gates told the troops. "And the same kind of military discipline that applies to – and regulations that apply to heterosexual relationships – will apply in terms of homosexual relationships."

In Washington, leaders from the four services testified before the House Armed Services Committee on the implementation of the new policy. Several expressed reservations last December when a divided Congress voted to repeal the law and President Barack Obama signed the legislation.

The repeal did not occur immediately as training and certification by the department were required before the ban is lifted. Training for the service members began around March 1 and is slated to be finished by summer's end.

Gen. James Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, had testified last year that permitting gays to serve openly could disrupt smaller combat units and distract leadership from preparing Marines for battle. On Thursday, Amos said during a recent trip to Afghanistan, he was specifically looking for problems that might arise.

"There hasn't been the recalcitrant push back, not been the anxiety of the forces in field," Amos told the committee. He said one commander told him troops are focused on the enemy.

Last year, Gen. Norton Schwartz, chief of staff of the Air Force, had recommended waiting until 2012 to implement the new policy.

"We're mitigating the risk the way we're approaching this," Schwartz said Thursday. He added he was more comfortable with the policy now than he was last December.

Adm. Gary Roughead, the chief of Naval Operations, said training was going well and the "type of questions reflect the professionalism and the maturity and the decency of our people."

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# UPDATE

## Domestic Abuse And Anti-Gay Bullying

TUCSON (Observer Update) - More than two million men and women are assaulted by an intimate partner each year, according to the National Institute for Justice. A survey conducted by the National Mental Health Association revealed that 78 percent of teens aged 12 to 17 reported that kids who are gay or who are thought to be gay are teased or bullied in their schools and communities.

The workshop, sponsored by Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse, Wingspan, and St. Francis in the Foothills UMC, will be held 9am - 3:30pm on Saturday, April 16, 2011 at St. Francis. Lunch will be provided.

The workshop will include Domestic Violence 101 presented by Emerge! This presentation provides a overview of the dynamics of domestic abuse, the effects of abuse on children, how to help, safety planning, and Emerge! Services. Wingspan's presentation will include LGBT 101 and intimate partner violence within this community. Wingspan will also address issues of bullying.

Tickets are available in advance through the St. Francis office (299-9063, Laura Aldag) or online (stfrancisumc.com under donate, programs) $15.00 until noon April 13, thereafter $20.00. Scholarships are available. Proceeds benefit Emerge! and Wingspan domestic violence programs.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Fimbres, 520-299-9839.

## Reveille Men's Chorus Spring Concert May 21-22

TUCSON (Observer Update) - "From Out of the West We Come", a BBQ flavored concert with all the fixins.

Reveille takes on western Americana and makes it our own. Load up the wagons and get ready to travel down the ol' Chisom trail for a Reveille style hoedown!

Tickets are $20 at the door, $15 for seniors and advance sales, $10 for students with I.D. Tickets can be purchased online at www.reveillemenschorus.org, by calling the Reveille line at 304-1758, at Antigone Books or from any Reveille member.

## 24th Annual Reno Gannon Memorial Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza, May 24

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza and Benefit Auction is a zany event and SAAF's longest running fundraising event, celebrating it's 24th year this 2011!

Save the Date: May 14, 2011. New Location: Kennedy Park - Mission & Ajo. Details to follow in upcoming editions.

For more information, call SAAF, 520-628-7223, or online at saaf.org/events.php.

## Aquarius: The 60s, Desert Voices Spring Concert April 20-May 1

TUCSON (Observer Update) - After the enforced conformity of the fifties, something had to give. People refused to live secretive, closeted lives anymore, and the music of the era reflected that.

From "Aquarius" to "Turn, Turn, Turn" the music of the 60s expressed the voices of diversity and many cultures around the world. Come hear Desert Voices bring back to life the Age of Aquarius! Saturday, April 30, 7:30 pm, Sunday, May 1, 3:00 pm

Both shows at the West Campus of Pima Community College Tickets are $15.00 each or two for $25.00. You can order online at www.desertvoices.org/events or call 520-791-9662.

## TGLBTCC Update

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The April Breakfast Meeting of the GLBT Chamber of Commerce will take place April 21, 7:30 to 9:00 AM, at the Manning House - Lavender Ballroom, 450 W Paseo Redondo # 212.

This month's topic is Networking: Developing Your Circle of Influence, with Chrisie Koury, Executive Director of Business Network International (BNI) for the Southern Arizona Region. The April chamber meeting will be completely dedicated to developing and sharpening your networking skills. Learn to strategically analyze what businesses and professionals you rely on most and how to leverage that connection for optimum business growth. Bring your "Thinking Cap" to this meeting and be prepared for an eye-opening look into your business relationships.

Info: $25 members, $30 guests and $5 discount if you RSVP by Friday, April 15, or call 520-615-

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## 'Treasures for TIHAN' Benefit Auction Saturday, April 20

The 14th Annual "TREASURES FOR TIHAN," the year's largest fundraising event to benefit the work of the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN), is Saturday, April 30, at 6:00pm at the Doubletree Hotel at Reid Park, located at 445 South Alvernon Way.

This spectacular event will feature great hors d'oeuvres, no-host cocktails, a live and silent auction, and festive entertainment! A huge collection of items to be auctioned feature original art, trips and travel, sports memorabilia, home and garden, health and beauty, celebrity items, and gift certificates for fine dining and services.

"Hollywood Nights" is the theme of this year's event – be a star and dress to impress the paparazzi! Arrive in style, walk on the red carpet, and have your picture taken as you enter the grand ballroom and take in our fabulous live and silent auction items. Local celebrity Chuck George, Chief Meteorologist for KOLD-TV 13, will serve as emcee for the event.

Event tickets are available in advance for $65, or two for $120, (or will be available on the day of the event for $75 each) and can be purchased online at www.tihan.org or by calling 299-6647. Also, raffle tickets are now on sale for a chance to win $1,000 cash - 5 chances to win for only $20, or get 15 chances for $50!

"Treasures for TIHAN" supports the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network, a non-profit organization that provides HIV education and support services for people affected by HIV/AIDS - including CareTeam support, lunch and breakfast programs, social and emotional support, information/referral and advocacy services, and other support services.

For more information about Treasures for TIHAN, contact Scott Blades, TIHAN Executive Director, at 299-6647 (office) or 603-7601 (cell phone) or visit www.tihan.org

[The Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN) is a coalition of individuals and 39 congregations from diverse faiths committed to an informed, compassionate response to HIV/AIDS: preventing the spread of HIV infection, providing compassionate care for those infected and affected, and catalyzing the religious community to provide an informed and compassionate response to the AIDS crisis.]

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@saaf.org

SAAF

Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation

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# Prop. 8 Judge Vaughn Walker: I'm Gay

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SAN FRANCISCO (Observer Update) - The judge who presided over the first federal trial to challenge the constitutionality of a gay marriage ban, Judge Vaughn Walker, says he's gay.

In speaking to reporters, Walker, a George W. Bush appointee, commented for the first time on the rumors of his sexuality. "He is a physician," Walker said of the man with whom he's had a 10 year relationship, news agency Reuters reported.

He added that he never considered his sexual orientation a good reason to recuse himself from the case, which challenged the constitutionality of Proposition 8, California's 2008 voter-approved gay marriage ban.

Walker, who retired from the federal bench in February after serving six years as chief judge in the Northern District of California, was outed by the San Francisco Chronicle nearly a year earlier. Previously he had offered a polite "No comment" to questions on his sexuality.

He ruled Prop 8 unconstitutional but supporters of the law have appealed the decision. Insiders believe the case will ultimately be decided by the Supreme Court, which could set national policy.

During the trial, backers of the law argued that they were placed at a "significant disadvantage" because California's gay community has powerful and influential allies, politicians and judges included among them. And concluded that the community does not need protection from the government. Walker's self outing is certain to add fodder to that argument.

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# AROUND THE GAY GLOBE. . .

An Italian professor is facing rebuke and possible termination because he told a radio interviewer that gays caused Rome's downfall. Roberto De Mattei is vice president of Italy's prestigious Centre for National Research in Rome. In a radio interview, the 63-year-old said, "The collapse of the Roman Empire and the arrival of the Barbarians was due to the spread of homosexuality. The Roman colony of Carthage was a paradise for homosexuals and they infected many others. The invasion of the Barbarians was seen as punishment for this moral transgression." Gay groups and some Italian lawmakers are calling for De Mattei's resignation.

Barry Dignam and Hugh Walsh, one of the first couples to celebrate a civil partnership when Ireland legalized them, are pushing their nation to enact marriage equality. While pleased with the new civil union law, Dignam told The Irish Times newspaper, "This change is a pretty sizable change, although it is a pity it's not full marriage." Walsh echoed his partner's sentiments. Aside from civil partnerships, Ireland has employment protections for its gay citizens and allows them to freely serve in the military.

A South Korea court ruled 5-4 that the country's military ban - which punishes homosexual behavior with up to a year in prison - is constitutional. Homosexuality itself is "not illegal" under the civil legal code, according to the AFP. The court said, in a statement: "The legal code cannot be seen as discrimination against gays because such behaviour, if left unchecked, might result in subordinates being harassed by superiors in military barracks."

The Telegraph reports that British officials are preparing to lift that nation's ban on gay men donating blood, but the change comes with a caveat – those who had sex in the last decade are still banned. In Britain, men who have sex with men have previously not been allowed to donate blood because of fear over HIV contamination. An advisory group found that should gay men be allowed to donate blood, and they haven't had sex in five years, the risk of contamination to the blood supply would go up less than 5%. Making the rule 10 years instead of five halved that number, and officials ultimately decided that was a safer choice.

A Government source told The Telegraph: "A complete ban is unfair and discriminatory but we need to protect public health, so the 10-year rule is what is being considered." Since 1985, the U.S. policy has been that any man who had sex with another man since 1977 is banned from donating.

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# Q NOTES

The parents of Andrew Wilfahrt, a gay soldier who was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan in February, remember their son in a passionate new video for the Courage Campaign.

"Our son Andrew was a gay man, very openly gay, and loud and proud about it when he lived here in Minneapolis," Jeff Wilfahrt says in the video. "Of course, when he entered the military, he had to go back in the closet." It's a moving tribute in support of overturning "don't ask, don't tell," and Jeff and Lori Wilfahrt speak passionately in memory of their son. ...

You may recall the story of Father James St. George, a popular Old Catholic Church Of The Americas priest who was fired from his job at Chestnut Hill College earlier this year for being gay even though he never hid that fact from anyone. Good news for St. George as he has just been hired to teach at the University of Pennsylvania:

"James St. George is teaching a class on religion, social justice, and urban development, together with another member of Penn's teaching staff."

"'It feels good to be teaching again,' St. George told the Inquirer. Father James St. George said he was dismissed from his teaching job at Chestnut Hill College on February 18 because of his sexual orientation."

# John Boehner Unsure Of DOMA Defense Costs

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Updte) - House Speaker John Boehner said he's unsure about the costs of defending the federal ban on gay marriage in court, gay weekly the Washington Blade reported.

A Boehner-appointed committee last month instructed House counsel to defend the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which bans federal recognition of the marriages of gay and lesbian couples, after President Barack Obama announced that his administration would no longer do so.

Democrats who oppose the move have pressured Boehner for an estimate of the costs, but the Republican from Ohio said at a press conference on Thursday that the costs are irrelevant.

"I do not have an estimate," Boehner said. "But we were placed in a position where we were in effect allowing the administration to determine the constitutionality of a bill that passed the United States Congress because they were unwilling to defend it. I don't think the House had any choice but to take the position that we were going to defend the work that the Congress - and only the courts are in the position of determining the constitutionality of any bill."

# Gay Rights Group Can Canvas Outside Target

SAN DIEGO (Observer Update) - A judge ruled that a San Diego pro-gay marriage group can continue canvassing outside of Target stores in California, but the group's volunteers must stay 30 feet away from store entrances and canvass at just one entrance at a time, reported 365Gay.com.

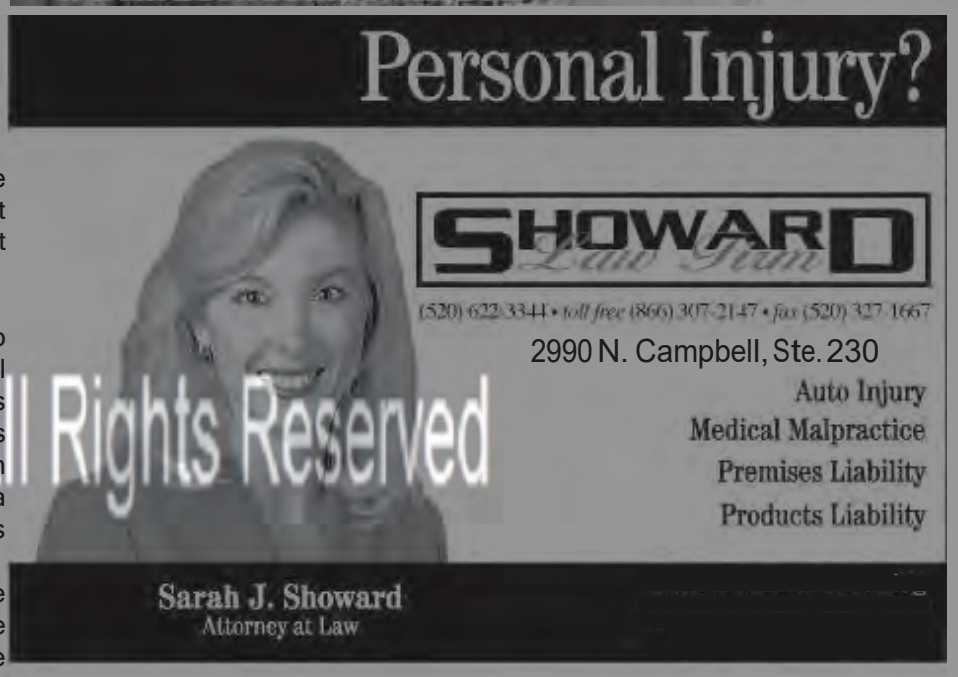
The Minnesota-based retail giant had sought an injunction barring the activists from every outlet in the state, alleging they harass customers by cornering them near store entrances to discuss gay marriage, solicit donations and collect signatures on petitions. Rights advocates have warned that the legal battle between Target and Canvass For A Cause could further damage the retailer's already strained relations with the gay and lesbian community.

Canvass For A Cause director Tres Watson called the ruling a win for not only his organization, but also for free speech. "I think this is a victory for every American that cherishes our fundamental values," he said.

Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Barton said some Target stores may fall under California's law that considers shopping centers to be public forums. Also, canvassing over the last year occurred mainly without incident and Target failed to demonstrate that customers were being harassed, he said.

"Target has not met its burden to show that its blanket policy to ban all solicitors at all stores in California is proper," he wrote. The corporation has said at least eight Target stores in the San Diego area have received more than a dozen complaints daily since canvassers started working the locations in October 2010. The activists have refused to leave when asked politely and shown the company's policy prohibiting "expressive activity" on its property, Target said.

During a court hearing last month in San Diego, Barton asked Target's Los Angeles-based attorney David McDowell why the company didn't present testimony from customers who the company said had complained. McDowell said the testimony could have been obtained, but he didn't think it was necessary since the complaints weren't the central issue. The case was about Target's right to enforce its rules on its land, he said. "The question is Target's property right and its right to exclude," McDowell said.



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# Arkansas Court Strikes Down Law Barring Gay Adoptions

LITTLE ROCK (Observer Update) - The Arkansas Supreme Court rejected a voter-approved initiative that barred gay couples and other unmarried people living together from serving as adoptive or foster parents, reports advocate.com.

Associate Justice Robert L. Brown wrote for the court that the law would encroach on adults' right to privacy in the bedroom. "Act 1 directly and substantially burdens the privacy rights of 'opposite-sex and same-sex individuals' who engage in private, consensual sexual conduct in the bedroom by foreclosing their eligibility to foster or adopt children," Brown wrote.

The law, which was never enforced, would have effectively banned gay and lesbian couples from adopting or fostering children because they can't legally marry in Arkansas. It also would have been extended to unmarried heterosexual couples who live together. Voters approved the measure in 2008 after the state Supreme Court overturned a Human Services Department policy preventing gay men and lesbians from serving as foster parents in 2006.

The American Civil Liberties Union sued on behalf of a group of families, arguing that the law arbitrarily bans qualified families from consideration when the state has too few foster and adoptive families. It said it knew of 29 people from a dozen families who claimed the law would have an impact on them.

Some of the law's opponents were worried that they would not be able to let a gay relative adopt their children if they should die. A state judge had struck down the law last April because he said it forced unmarried couples to choose between their relationships and becoming adoptive parents. The attorney general later asked the Supreme Court to reverse that decision, arguing that fostering or adopting a child is not a constitutionally protected right.

When the lawsuit was filed in late 2008, Arkansas and Utah were the only states with bans on unmarried couples fostering or adopting children. Mississippi banned gay couples, but not single gay men, from adopting children. Florida was the only state to completely bar gay adoption until a federal judge ruled the ban unconstitutional in December 2008.

# Report: LGBT Elders Fear Discrimination

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - A majority of respondants who answered a national online survey believe that staff of long-term care facilities would discriminate against them if they were open about their sexual or gender orientation, a new report from the National Senior Citizens Law Center says.

The responders included LGBT elders, family members of LGBTs, social service providers and legal service providers.

The report, called LGBT Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities: Stories From the Field - analyzed survey results that culled stories of abuse and neglect. Though the survey was not a scientific sample, it included hundreds of personal comments and included reports of 853 instances of mistreatment.

"In SAGE's experience, LGBT older adults often fear that they will encounter providers who might be uncomfortable with, or even hostile, towards them, untrained to work with them or unaware that they even exist. Even when providers are supportive, fear of discrimination keeps many LGBT elders in the closet and prevents them from seeking the care they need," said Michael Adams, Executive Director of SAGE. "This speaks to a great need for training on cultural competency and LGBT aging issues, available through outlets such as the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging, for staff at long-term care facilities."

The survey, website and the report were prepared by the National Senior Citizens Law Center in collaboration with Lambda Legal, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Center for Transgender Equality, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE).

tucsonobserverarchives.org

# BUZZ - BUZZ - BUZZ - BUZZ - Senate Committee Advances Gay Judicial Nominee

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - The Senate judiciary committee unanimously approved the nomination of J. Paul Oetken, moving him one step closer to becoming the first openly gay man to serve on the federal bench.

The Washington Blade reports on the voice vote for Oetken, who was nominated in January by President Barack Obama for U.S. district judge for the southern district of New York.

"Now that the panel has approved the Oetken nomination, it will head to the Senate floor, where support from 60 senators is needed for his confirmation. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's (D-Nev.) office didn't respond on a short notice to request on a comment on when the nomination would see a floor vote," reports the Blade

# Global Report Highlights LGBT Abuses

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - An annual report on human rights shows a global increase in violence against LGBT people as well as racial, religious, and ethnic minorities and women, children, and people with disabilities, reports advocate.com.

In a press conference announcing the results of the study, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said there had been a vast crackdown on Internet freedom in the past year and increased suppression of civil rights groups, especially in the Middle East. "Societies flourish when they address human rights problems instead of suppressing them," Clinton said, according to The Washington Post.

The report by the U.S. State Department cites several countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Caribbean that persecute people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. The country of Uganda has shown an increase in violence against LGBT people, and the department says Honduras saw "an upsurge in killings of members of the LGBT community by unknown perpetrators."

The report largely addresses the status of LGBT rights in the 190 countries studied in 2010. The United States is excluded.

# Tennessee Moves Against Nashville's Gay Protective Law

KNOXVILLE (Observer Update) - The Tennessee Legislature is moving against Nashville's newly-approved gay protections ordinance.

The governing body of the City of Nashville and Davidson County, which merged in 1963, narrowly approved a plan to extend the city's gay protections to contractors, joining more than 100 communities across the nation.

The 2009 law bans employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (transgender protections). The fight to outlaw Nashville and other municipalities from enacting such laws was taking shape before the city council acted.

Less than 24 hours after Nashville adopted its ordinance, the House Commerce Subcommittee unanimously voted in favor of a bill that would strip the state of all gay protections laws.

The subcommittee had previously opposed House bill 600, which would ban cities from enacting their own policies on minimum wages, health care, family leave and discrimination.

The bill approved narrowed its focus to banning gay protections policies.

# Plan To Repeal DOMA State By State

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - The Courage Campaign has launched a 50-state strategy to repeal the so-called Defense of Marriage Act, which is also being challenged in federal court cases and by Congress, reported advocate.com.

The plan, in conjunction with longtime activist Cleve Jones, will be managed on a grassroots level, with efforts in each of the 435 congressional districts.

"From the reddest and most homophobic, to the bluest and pro-LGBT, everyone can play a part," Courage Campaign's Adam Bink wrote in a call to action Wednesday.

The campaign is looking for local coordinators, volunteers, and donations to run their effort.

"Look, I've been in this movement a long time and I'm nearly 60 (if can you believe it)," Jones wrote in a message to supporters. "I'm not saying it's made me wise, but it's given me a lot of memories. And I've never seen anything like the sea change we've seen in the last two years. Now is the time to finish the job."

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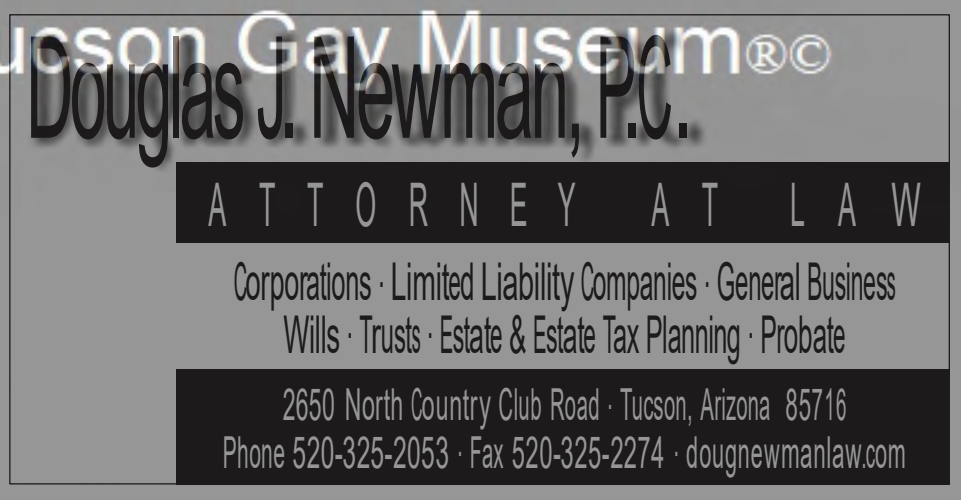


# COMMENTARY. . . .

by Judy Rickard

## United By Love, Divided By Law

The news that Lavi Soloway, long associated with the fight for same-sex binational couples to be together in America, had held off the deportation of Rodrigo Martinez, keeping him in Maryland with his legally-married husband Edwin Echegoyen, made me cry.

The last few weeks have given me more hope than the last few years have that same-sex binational couples like mine can overcome the pain and suffering U.S. immigration and marriage laws cause us. I am thrilled to see that people in government are listening. It means that we might one day not be seen as legal strangers by the United States government. Our relationships must be recognized. Our marriages and families, if not validated, continue the current status that we face. We do not have the equal rights our country espouses.

I now have hope that my partner Karin and I will no longer be geographic yo-yos. I can see a glimmer of hope for the couples and families with children I have interviewed for my book Torn Apart: United by Love, Divided by Law. I feel like they can be together where they want, without fear and without extra expense and separation. I hope I am right.

Last year, my family was torn apart again because I cannot sponsor my partner for immigration to the United States. I tried. I had filled out the forms at Congressman Mike Honda's office. But the request was denied by the federal government.

So when her visa ran out in October, Karin had to leave. I stayed behind because my brother-in-law was battling his second bout with cancer. I stayed in America to help him and my sister. But before Karin could return, we lost John. When Karin finally came home, she had to endure more than an hour of questioning by ICE – Immigration and Customs Enforcement – officers before being allowed a visit with me.

New census data will give us updates, but an estimated 36,000 Americans deal with this situation today. LGBT couples and families face being torn apart, being deported, living in the shadows or facing unspeakable acts when returned to their home countries if denied asylum here.

We are not legal strangers. Our families matter. We pay the same taxes and face the same challenges as other families. We want the same opportunities and promises that America offers all its citizens.

U.S. immigration law must include provisions for same-sex partners, the same as opposite gender spouses, or we continue to be discriminated against. U.S. marriage law must allow same-sex marriage to be recognized federally and in each state or we continue to face discrimination and second class status is maintained.

Let the news stories we have seen – and felt good about – these past few days be the beginning of a sweeping move by America to right these wrongs and extend liberty and justice to those of us who feel the sting of its absence - and right away!

(Judy Rickard wrote this for advocate.com, from which this is reprinted from).

Tucson Observer Archives

## G/L Parents More Accepted Than Single Moms

NEW YORK (Observer Update) - A new survey shows that Americans tend to be more accepting of gay and lesbian couples raising children than single parents, reports advocate.com.

One third of Americans say they are comfortable with a variety of family situations, according to a study by the Pew Research Center. That group is called "acceptors." Another third, called "skeptics" by researchers, have mixed views on nontraditional family structures. The final third group, known as "rejectors," believe nontraditional families can have a negative impact on society.

The majority of acceptors and skeptics say that families headed by gay and lesbian parents are an acceptable, if not a positive, asset to society. The view on single mothers, however, is quite polarized. Ninety-eight percent of acceptors think women can raise children alone, but 99% of skeptics and 98% of rejectors believe it's bad for society. The survey did not ask about single fathers.

Katherine Stamps Mitchell, a professor at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, told MSNBC that the gay and lesbian parents are favored because they're providing a two-parent family, as opposed to a single-parent family. She added that media helps with acceptance of gay and lesbian couples and families.

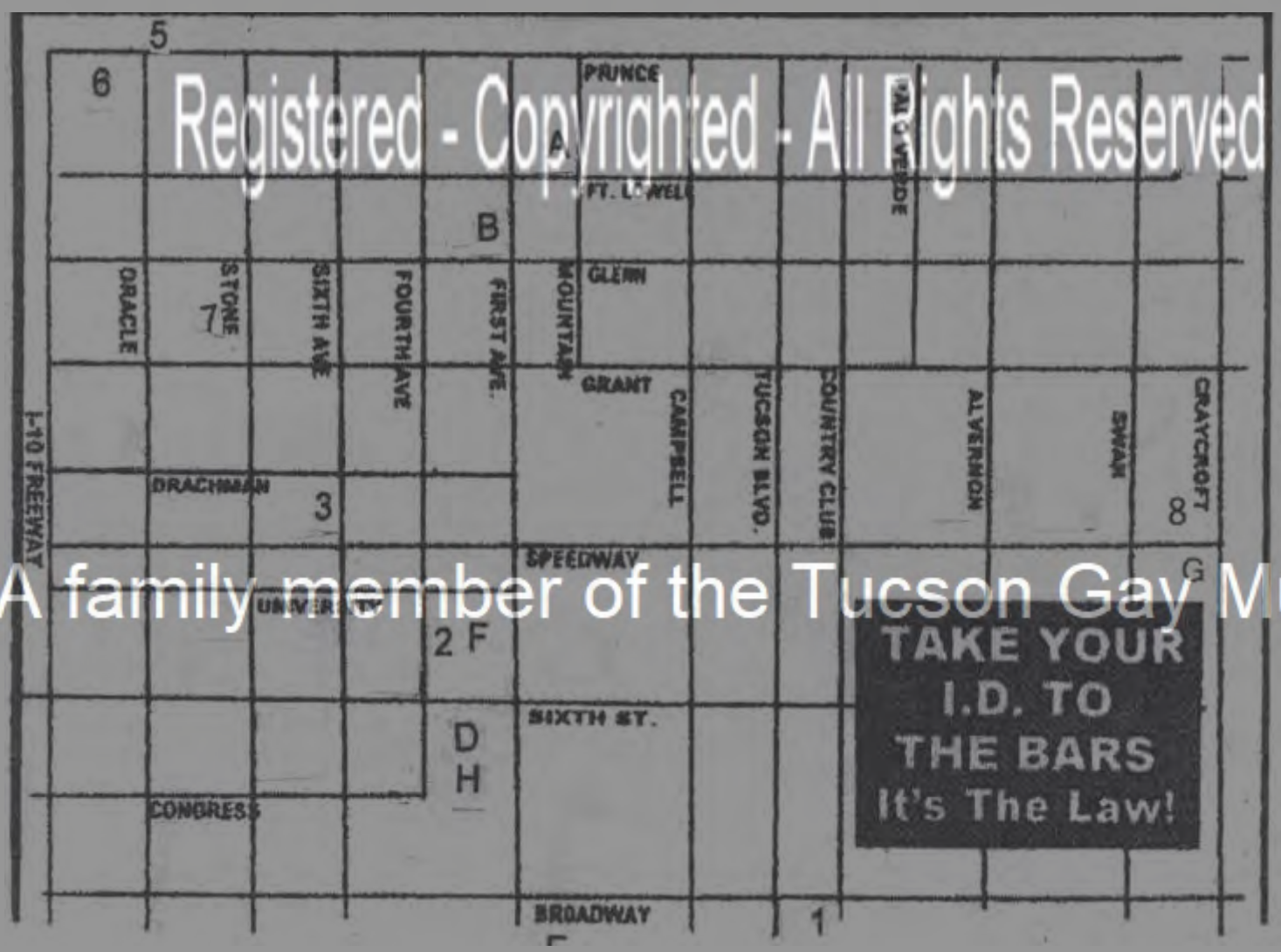
"You're seeing gay families more and more on TV in shows like Modern Family and in movies like The Kids Are All Right," Stamps Mitchell said.

## New Orleans Cops Targeted Gays, Blacks

NEW ORLEANS (Observer Update) - The New Orleans Police Department is under fire for symptomatic misconduct, with charges that cops used excessive force and targeted black and gay residents, reports advocate.com.

The Washington Post reports on a 10-month analysis by the Department of Justice, indicating that the police had singled out gay and lesbian residents for unjustified stops, arrests, and harassment. Additionally, the analysis showed 500 African-American males older than age 17 were arrested in 2009 while only eight white males were arrested during the year. In the 27 instances in which an officer intentionally fired a weapon at sometime, all 27 individuals were black.

Justice officials said in a press conference Friday that they would work with the city to help change the police department, which has been in decline since the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. "My colleagues and I are not naive about the enormity of the task that lies ahead," said the DOJ's Thomas E. Perez. "But we at the Justice Department have been heartened by the dedication to sustainable change we have seen throughout the city."

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# BUZZ FLASHES - BUZZ FLASHES

Jesse Cruz, a junior at New Jersey's Seton Hall, says he was unfairly removed from his dorm room because he is gay and is now suing the school for emotional and psychological trauma. According to New Jersey paper The Record, the public relations student paid close to $4,000 for a full semester of housing and was assigned to a double room at the school's Xavier Hall.

Seton's policy allows for any student who is unhappy with their living arrangement for any reason to request a new room on "Room Change Day." However, when Cruz's roommate complained that he didn't want to be paired with Cruz, it was Cruz who was removed, not the person who had filed the complaint.

In a lawsuit, Cruz alleges that he was reassigned to another building because of his sexual orientation. A lawyer representing Seton Hall wrote that "the University has never taken any action against Mr. Cruz based on his sexual preference." Cruz has since been returned to his original dorm and has not had any problems with his new roommate. "On a moral level, we are seeking to make sure that this never happens again," said Cruz's attorney, Rosemarie Arnold. "We as parents send our children into the real world for the first time when we send them to college, and we expect the college to treat them responsibly." ...

Bobby May, sheriff of Arkansas's St. Francis County, says he believes the death of transgender woman Marcal Camero Tye is a routine murder case and not a hate crime. In an interview with FM 89 News, May conjectured that Tye had gotten involved in a late night sexual scenario with a stranger that turned deadly. According to preliminary autopsy results, the 25-year-old Tye, who was born a man but had been living as a woman, was killed by a gunshot to the head. Shell casings found at the scene appear to corroborate this.

While early reports implied that the victim was dragged behind a vehicle by a rope or chain, Sheriff May says a more likely scenario is that Tye's body was caught underneath the vehicle and inadvertently dragged. Evidence suggests the suspect backed up in an attempt to dislodge it. While the FBI has declined to comment on Sheriff May's statements, spokesman Steve Frazier says agents will continue investigating the case as a possible hate crime or civil rights violation.

# Easy Hearing For Gay Judge Nominee

HINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - A judicial nominee faced no opposition at a Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearing that could lead to him becoming the first openly gay man to serve as a federal judge, reports advocate.com.

New York attorney J. Paul Oetken was recommended to President Barack Obama by Sen. Charles Schumer. If confirmed he would be assigned to the U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

"Paul is the first openly gay man to go through an Article III confirmation process in this country, which makes this moment historic," Schumer said according to the Washington Blade."But long after today, what the history books will note about Paul is certain to be his achievements as a fair and brilliant judge."

Oetken is currently general counsel of Cablevision, and previously served as associate counsel to President Bill Clinton from 1999 to 2001. According to the Blade, Oetken also has worked with Lambda Legal, the American Civl Liberties Union, and co-authored a amicus brief for the U.S. Supreme Court for Lawrence v. Texas, the lawsuit that resulted in the overturn of sodomy laws.

# St. Lucia Decries Attack On Three Gay U.S. Tourists

CASTRIES (Observer Update) - A robbery and assault on three gay American tourists at their vacation cottage has St. Lucia officials scrambling to assure visitors that the southern Caribbean island is safe and welcoming for gays and lesbians, reported the AP on 365Gay.com.

Tourism Minister Allen Chastanet issued an apology Monday to three men from Atlanta after masked bandits broke into their mountain rental home in Soufriere. One victim said the gunmen made slurs against gays, white people and Americans during the March 2 assault.

The tiny, tourism-dependent Caribbean country is typically peaceful and a safe place for all kinds of travelers, Chastanet said. He said the attack was "unacceptable behavior and our destination will not tolerate it."

Police announced that they have arrested two suspects in the assault and are looking for three more. This former British territory is not known as a risky place for gays, particularly compared with other, socially conservative Caribbean islands where many gays are not open about their sexuality.

Nonetheless, a victim who detailed his account of the robbery on Facebook said he believes the attack was "partly a gay bashing."

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# Poet's Corner

8,000 EYES

by Ron Rose - Tucson

8,000 eyes on bodybags, no longer can they see
For they have snatched a sure defeat from promised victory.
Their leaders spun a twisted tale of weapons we should fear
And finally home in body bags, we shed a final tear.
Continue on, the story goes, we'll march to victory
While senseless lives we daily lose, please listen to our plea.
Just end this war, there's only more. Just you wait and see
Please no more suffering, just let our young folks be.

Tucson Observer Archives

## The Way I Saw It. . .by Gary Clark

NOTE: Before his untimely death, Gary Clark had worked on this newspaper for nearly 40 years as graphic artist and Entertainment Editor. Part of his heritage was producing a weekly humorous drawing of life 'as he saw it'. It is amazing that most of these drawings are as funny and entertaining today as they were in past years. We have decided to open the 'vaults' on these faultless viewpoints. Enjoy!

tucsonobserverarchives.org

# Lesbian Activist Leads Recall Of Miami-Dade Commissioner

MIAMI (Observer Update) - Lesbian activist Vanessa Brito led a successful effort to recall longtime Miami-Dade commissioner Natacha Seijas, reports advocate.com.

According to The Miami Herald, almost 90% of voters in District 13 backed the recall of Seijas, who has helmed the area for 18 years. She became a recall target last year after she voted for a budget that raised property taxes in the area hard hit by the real estate crisis and also raised salaries for county employees.

Brito, a 27-year-old board member of Unity Coalition, a Hispanic LGBT political group, was assisted by Michael Pizzi, the mayor of Miami Lakes. "Brito started Miami Voice, a political action committee, to target county commissioners who had supported the budget," reports the Herald. "The group had little money, but it got help from Pizzi, a long-time opponent of Seijas with a knack for political theater. The group garnered sufficient petitions to force a vote only for Seijas."

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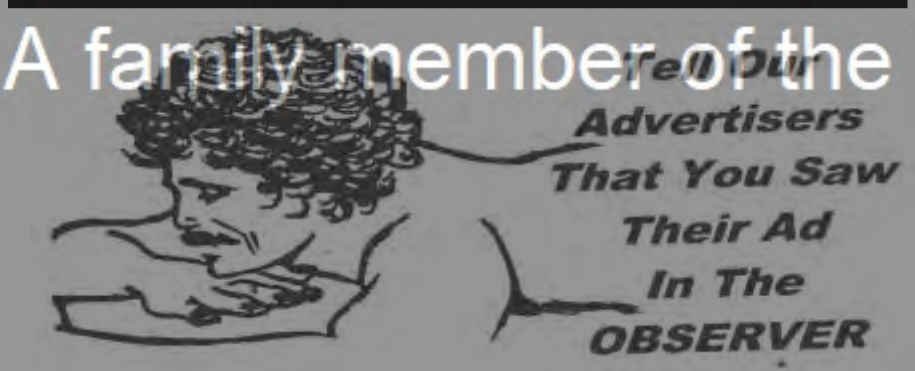


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# Court Rules OK For Employee To Be Fired For Anti-Gay Comments

WASHINGTON, DC (Observer Update) - Wal-Mart did not violate the 1964 Civil Rights Act when it fired an employee for making anti-gay statements during her work break, ruled the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, reports advocate.com.

Tanisha Matthews, an Apostolic Christian, told other employees in the store's break room that God does not accept gays and that gay people will "go to hell" because they're not "right in the head," reported Gay City News. Five other employees confirmed the incident when Wal-Mart investigated. Matthews was determined to have made inappropriate remarks that constituted harassment and violated the company's zero tolerance policy for sexual orientation harassment. She was fired. Matthews sued and claimed religious discrimination under the Civil Rights Act.

In an unsigned opinion, the Appeals Court said: "If Matthews is arguing that Wal-Mart must permit her to admonish gays at work to accommodate her religion, the claim fails. Wal-Mart fired her because she violated company policy when she harassed a co-worker, not because of her beliefs, and employers need not relieve workers from complying with neutral workplace rules as a religious accommodation if it would create an undue hardship. In this case, such an accommodation would place Wal-Mart on the 'razor's edge' of liability by exposing it to claims of permitting work-place harassment."

# Delaware Senate Passes Civil Unions Bill

DOVER (Observer Update) - The Delaware senate passed a measure that would allow same-sex couples to enter into civil unions. The bill now heads to the house for approval. According to the Associated Press, the bill passed by a 13 to 6 vote, reports advocate.com.

"Lawmakers defeated two last-minute amendments to the legislation offered by Laurel Democrat Robert Venables," reports the AP. "One would have allowed civil unions for heterosexual couples as well as homosexuals. The other would have required that a majority of Delaware residents approve civil unions in a statewide referendum before they could take effect."

The measure, introduced by Sen. David Sokola and Rep. Melanie George, would allow civil unions only for same-sex couples in Delaware. Similar legal unions for same-sex couples from other jurisdictions, such as civil unions and marriages, would be recognized as civil unions in Delaware.

Describing her reaction to the senate vote as "thrilled," Equality Delaware president Lisa Goodman expressed confidence about the prospects for the bill in the house. The legislative session in Delaware ends on June 30. "We are expecting to be heard in a timely fashion in the house," said Goodman in a telephone interview with The Advocate. "We're not expecting to be heard in June."

# DAILY BAR CALENDAR

## SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Closed Sunday , Monday, Tuesday

BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am - 8pm.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 11am. Beer Bust Sunday - $1 draft beers (12 oz), domestic only; $2.25 domestic long necks. Hair of dog special $1.50 well bloody mary, screwdriver,,Cape Cod, salty dog or margarita.

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. Beer specials and Trailer Trash Martini's All Day. Check our Ad for Special Events or Parties

## MONDAY

THE BIZ - Closed Mondays

BRODIES - Open 10am-2am. Happy Hour10am - 8pm.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 8pm.- 1am

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. Service Industry Night - Employee prices all day..

## TUESDAY

THE BIZ - Closed Tuesdays

BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am.Happy Hour 10am-8pm

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 4pm - 1am. Happy Hour 4-8. $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. Girlz Nite .75 for your favorite well drink or domestic drafts 6-8pm. Ladies only Texas Hold 'Em Poker 6 p.m. Y-Not Karaoke with Anna at 8pm. - Drink specials during karaoke $1 Michelob Ultra or Bud Light.

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. 2-4-1 Night

## WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-9pm (2 for 1). College Night 18 & Over. Drink & Shot specials every half hour.

BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am-8pm

COYOTE MOON PUB -Open 4pm - 1am. Happy Hour All Day $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitchers. Boyz Night - .75 for your favorite well drink or domestic draft beer for men 6-8pm. Karaoke with Anna at 8pm drink specials during karaoke $1 Michelob Ultra or Bud Light..

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics.. 11pm - -close "Reverse Happy Hour".

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am;. Happy Hour Prices all day.

## THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-9pm. 2 for 1 All Night Long.. Karaoke 9pm. Come out and play.

BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am - 8pm.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 4pm.- 1am. Happy Hour 4 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. Latin Thursday: Latin music 8pm to close. $2,50 well margaritas. $3 Mexican beers, $3.50 Jose Cuervo.

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 Skyy Cape Cods and $4 Skyy Cosmos.

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Free pool and Happy Hour prices all day.

## FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 5-9 pm (2 for1) Latino Night. $2 Tequila, $1.50 Tecate. $5 Buckets of Beer.

. BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am-8pm. Karaoke 9pm.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 4pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 Sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. Shots shot specials 8-close.. Dance lessons with Lawrence 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 vocals and piano stylings of Susan Artemis 6-9pm. Tori Steele Show 10pm

## SATURDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm - 2am. $10 and drink for pennies. All night long.

BRODIES - Open 10am - 2am. Happy Hour 10am - 8pm.

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 OR two chicken tenders & fries. 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. .

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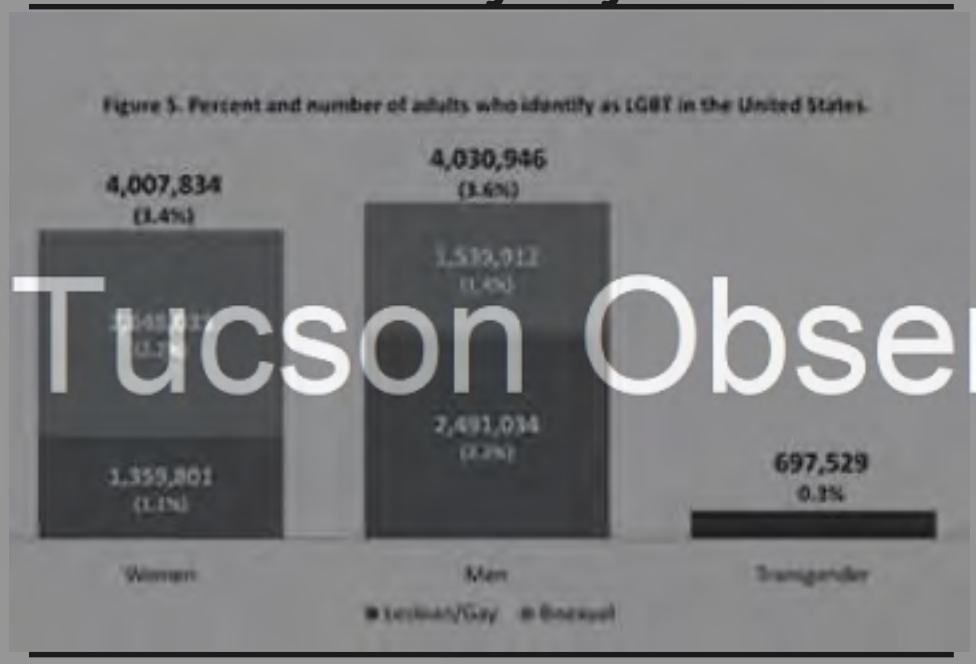
# Nine Million LGBT Americans, Survey Says




LOS ANGELES (Observer Update) - According to a report released by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law, 3.5 percent of adults in America identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, and an estimated 0.3 percent of adults are transgender.

Putting the number of LGBT Americans at 9 million, or roughly the population of New Jersey.

Demographer Gary Gates arrived at the estimates by averaging national polls conducted between 2004 and 2009.

"The number matters," Gates told The Washington Post. "An unfortunate part of our political system is that you don't really count unless you're counted. LGBT Americans still are not routinely counted. That allows legislators and policymakers to say they really don't matter much, because if they did, we'd have this data."

Approximately 1.7 percent of adults identify as lesbian or gay, while 1.8 percent say they're bisexual. Women are more likely to identify as bisexual than men.

An estimated 19 million Americans (8.2%) say they've engaged in sexual behavior with a member of the same sex and more than a quarter of the population (25.6%) acknowledge at least some same-sex sexual attraction.

# Indiana Senate Approves Constitutional Gay Marriage Ban

INDIANAPOLIS (Observer Update) - The Indiana Senate approved a state constitutional amendment that would gay marriages and civil unions. The vote was 40-10, reports IndyStar.com

The measure has already passed the House. If it passes the General Assembly again in 2013 or 2014 it would go on the election ballot in 2014, reports 365gay.com. Voters would need to approve the ban before the state constitution was amended. Current state law already prohibits gay marriage. Says IndyStar.com:

"Democratic Sen. Tim Lanane of Anderson argued that attitudes toward same-sex marriages are rapidly changing and the amendment would make it difficult for future changes in state law.

"Some major Indiana corporations, including Eli Lilly and Co. and Cummins, oppose the amendment saying it will make it harder to draw top talent to the state."

# Bill Recognizing Domestic Partnerships Signed Law: Same-Sex Marriages Of Other States Recognized

OLYMPIA (Observer Update) - Gov. Christine Gregoire has signed into law a bill that recognizes out-of-state same-sex marriages with all the rights and protections given to registered domestic partnerships in Washington, the AP reported at pageoneq.com.

Legislators who supported the measure described it as a "technical correction" that closes a loophole in the law it replaces. Previously, Washington recognized only domestic partnerships and civil unions. But same-sex marriages received no benefits coverage. Rep. Jamie Pedersen, D-Seattle, one of the bill's sponsors, said that when state laws recognizing domestic partnerships were first written, gay marriage wasn't legal in many places.

This led to some "very illogical results" as such laws changed. Pedersen said that in many places domestic partnership laws have been replaced with same-sex marriage laws, and civil unions that would have been recognized in Washington "automatically became unrecognized as they matured into marriages in their state." There was no change in the people involved, he continued, but suddenly Washington was saying that they no longer received protection. The bill's original sponsor Rep. Laurie Jinkins, D-Tacoma, said this action closes "a hole in the law."

"This bill is about fairness for all families," Jinkins said when the bill passed the House last month. By passing Referendum 71 in 2009 and extending recognition of legal protections that amounted to "everything but marriage" for domestic partnerships, she said, "Washington voters decided they wanted all families to be able to protect themselves under Washington state law." Opposition Republicans argued that the bill brought Washington one step closer to legalizing gay marriage and breaking down families.

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