Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Calif. Supreme Court Upholds Prop. 8; G/L Marriage Remains Banned In State; Another Ballot Fight Ensured

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Observer Update) - The California Supreme Court today upheld Proposition 8's ban on same-sex marriage but also ruled that Gay and Lesbian couples who wed before the election will continue to be married under state law, reported latimes.com blog. The decision virtually ensures another fight at the ballot box over marriage rights for Gays. Gay rights activists said they may ask voters to repeal the marriage ban as early as next year, and opponents have pledged to fight any such effort. Proposition 8 passed with 52% of the vote.

By a 52-48 margin, voters approved the measure reinstating a ban on same-sex marriage after the state Supreme Court, in a landmark ruling last May, approved such marriages. Left in limbo were about 18,000 couples who got married in California between May and November of last year. The case for overturning the initiative was widely viewed as a long shot. Gay rights lawyers had no solid legal precedent on their side, and some of the court's earlier holdings on constitutional revisions mildly undercut their arguments.

But Gay marriage advocates captured a wide array of support in the case, with civil rights groups, legal scholars and even some churches urging the court to overturn the measure. Supporters of the measure included many churches and religious organizations.

The legal fight over same-sex marriage in California began in San Francisco in 2004, when Mayor Gavin Newsom spurned state law, and the city began issuing marriage licenses to Gay couples. Long lines of couples showed up to marry and celebrated within view of the court with rice and champagne. Those marriages sparked a national debate about Gay rights and made the marriage question a political issue in an election year. Dozens of states later adopted constitutional amendments to bar same-sex marriage.

Those Gay and Lesbian couples who wed in San Francisco later had their marriages rescinded by the California Supreme Court, which ruled that a city could not single-handedly flout state law. But the court said supporters of marriage rights could challenge the ban in the lower courts.

The legal fight moved to San Francisco Superior Court, where a judge struck down the marriage ban as unconstitutional. A Court of Appeal in San Francisco later overturned that decision on a 2-1 vote. The state high court eventually took up the case, which culminated in a May 15 ruling last year declaring Gays and Lesbians could marry each other.

Before last fall, California was one of only two states – the other was Massachusetts – to permit same-sex marriage. Iowa, Connecticut, Vermont and Maine have since legalized it, and lawmakers in New York, New Jersey and New Hampshire are considering bills of their own.

California's historic 2008 ruling, written by Chief Justice Ronald George, repeatedly invoked the words "respect and dignity" and framed the marriage question as one that deeply affected not just couples but also their children. California has more than 100,000 households headed by Gay couples, about a quarter with children, according to 2000 census data.

As soon as the ruling was final, thousands of Gay and Lesbian couples showed up at city halls around the state to marry, and many flew in from elsewhere for California weddings. While the wedding business was brisk, opponents mounted a heated campaign with the help of churches and conservatives to overturn the court's action.

Even though the court has upheld Proposition 8, a key portion of the court's May 15, 2008, decision remains intact. Sexual orientation will continue to receive the strongest constitutional protection possible when California courts consider cases of alleged discrimination. The California Supreme Court is the only state high court in the nation to have elevated sexual orientation to the status of race and gender in weighing discrimination claims.

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Grassroots Call To Action

DALLAS, TX (Observer Update) - A group of about 20 LGBT activists released a set of equality principles that they hoped would prompt all LGBT people to get more involved in the struggle for their rights, advocate.com reported. "This is about looking forward, it is a grassroots effort to mobilize, empower, and inspire others to stand up and accept nothing less than full legal equality now," said Paul Yandura, a Democratic strategist from Washington, D.C., and one of the activists who met in Dallas to discuss the current progress of the LGBT movement. "In many ways, the Dallas meeting was truly organic; the common thread between the participants was our desire to achieve full civil rights for the LGBT community faster."

The group, which included grassroots activists, bloggers, and donors/fund-raisers, laid out eight organizing principles that underlie their call to action, seven civil rights goals for the movement as a whole, and seven ways to get involved, all of which are included in this week's edition. Participants said the meeting was mutually driven by a sense of historic opportunity combined with some discontentment over the pace at which LGBT rights are moving forward.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime alignment of the stars, and if we blow it now, it might be another 20 years before we have it again," New York activist Jon Winkleman said of having an LGBT-friendly president along with huge Democratic majorities in the House and Senate. "For myself, I've been frustrated," he added. "I think a lot of big organizations should be setting a higher standard."

For a number of reasons, Winkleman said the group decided not to include any executive directors from big LGBT organizations such as the Human Rights Campaign or the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. He said they hoped to create something fresh and aspirational that was not driven by the needs, desires, resources, or advancement of any one particular organization. "I've been an activist for 24 years," he said. "This is the first time I've had a strategy session like this that wasn't framed through the lens of an organization."

Dixon Osburn, a Washington lawyer and the former executive director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, said the group also wanted to hold the Obama administration and Congress to a higher standard. "The president needs to use the bully pulpit to advance our rights; he needs to work with Congress and he needs to be working with the heads of agencies," he said. "We don't think it's acceptable to kick the can down the road on 'don't ask, don't tell,' for instance, and not set a timeline for repeal. The bottom line is, we want to see results and we want to see them now."

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Craigslist: 'You Can't Sue Us'

CHARLESTON, S.C. (Observer Update) - Craigslist filed suit against South Carolina's attorney general in an attempt to block him from filing criminal charges against the classifieds website for abetting prostitution, reported advocate.com. Attorney General Henry McMaster has accused the San Francisco-based website of allowing solicitations for sex to flourish unchecked. Despite numerous promises from Craigslist to crack down on the postings, McMaster maintains no progress has been made.

The suit, filed in South Carolina's federal court, claims McMaster is violating Craigslist's constitutional rights with threats of prosecution. It's an about-face for the usually low-key company, which until now has appeared to be adhering to demands from various state attorneys to curtail prostitution. Now, Craigslist is fighting back. "As a practical matter, the only way for Craigslist to assure compliance with Mr. McMaster's demands would be to shut down completely all portions of its Web site dedicated to the state of South Carolina," Craigslist CEO Jim Buckmaster said in the suit.

The same day the suit was filed, New York attorney general Andrew Cuomo claimed he had indicted seven people on charges of operating a prostitution ring in 2007 and 2008. All of the people advertised exclusively on Craigslist, he said. Craigslist has been under intense scrutiny before, but the classified site wound up back in the headlines with the "Craigslist Killer," who is accused of killing a 26-year-old masseuse and allegedly going after men on the website. Additionally, a teenage boy is accused of killing prominent New York radio journalist George Weber after he was allegedly solicited for "rough sex" on the website. The teen claims Weber promised him $60.

Maine Diocese In Violation Of Tax Law

AUGUSTA, ME (Observer Update) - The Roman Catholic Diocese of Maine stands in violation of tax law for its lobbying efforts to repeal the new marriage-equality law, charges the Empowering Spirits Foundation. The San Diego-based group filed a challenge at an Internal Revenue Service office in Dallas, reports the Associated Press.

According to the complaint, the diocese's efforts to collect signatures for a possible marriage-equality referendum constitute political activity, which violates IRS rules for tax-exempt nonprofits, reported advocate.com.

Marriage-equality opponents including the diocese are seeking to collect at least 55,087 signatures from registered voters in order to qualify a ballot question that could overturn the new law. Petitioners must collect the signatures within 90 days after the legislature adjourns in mid June.

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UPDATE

Bisbee Pride

BISBEE (Observer Update) - On Father's Day Weekend, June 19-21, Bisbee will be hosting its annual Pride Weekend of Activities.

This annual event is sponsored, hosted and organized by Bisbee Pride, whose mission s to encourage the expression and celebrate, champion, and support the rights and freedoms of the southeastern Arizona Pride Community (meaning Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, other same sex attracted people and those that support them), as well as provide educational outreach to the community at large.

There are many events scheduled for this week, to get the schedule, other information or get questions answered, go online to bisbeepride.com.

Colorful Life Series Featuring Dietrich Benjamin, May 31

TUCSON (Observer Update) - On May 31, 2:00 p.m., at the Ward 6 Council Office, 3202 E. 1st, welcome Dietrich Benjamin (Dolores Dianne Elizabeth D'Amario) to the Colorful Life series.

Join Senior Pride for an entertaining and educational sharing of life experience. Dietrich will talk about her journey to a place of self-acceptance in identifying with our Bi community. Seniors, Juniors, Allies - everyone welcome. As part of Senior Pride's commitment to preserve our LGBT history, this event will be taped and the resulting DVD will join the past presentations in the Wingspan library.

For more information, contact Penelope Starr at Wingspan, (520) 624-1779, Ext. 122.

Wingspan Volunteer Orientation, May 30

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Want to be a Wingspan Volunteer? Volunteering at Wingspan is a great way to meet some of the most interesting, smart, talented, fun people in Tucson!

Wingspan's Volunteer Orientation, 1:00 p.m., May 30 in the Anzaldua Room at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th, is the first step. It will be a brief introduction to your community center and about the diverse volunteer opportunities available. Remember, Wingspan is very much a volunteer-run organization, we could not possibly exist without our outstanding volunteers!

For more information, contact Madeline Porta, (520) 624-1779.

Kirby Dick's 'Outrage' June 5

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Meet Oscar-nominated filmmaker KIRBY DICK at a post-film Q&A on Saturday, June 6, 7:00 p.m., at the Loft Cinema, 3233 E. Speedway for "Outrage."

From Academy Award-nominated documentary filmmaker Kirby Dick (This Film Is Not Yet Rated, Twist of Faith) comes OUTRAGE, a searing and controversial indictment of the hypocrisy of closeted politicians with appalling Gay rights voting records who actively campaign against the LGBT community they covertly belong to. Boldly revealing the hidden lives of some of the United States' most powerful policymakers, OUTRAGE takes a comprehensive look at the harm they've inflicted on millions of Americans, and examines the media's complicity in keeping their secrets.

With analysis from prominent members of the Gay community such as Congressman Barney Frank, former NJ Governor Jim McGreevey, activist Larry Kramer, radio personality Michelangelo Signorile, and openly Lesbian congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (Representative, Wisconsin 2nd district), OUTRAGE probes deeply into the psychology of this double lifestyle, the ethics of outing closeted politicians, the double standards that the media upholds in its coverage of the sex lives of Gay public figures, and much more.

Regular admission prices will be charged for this special screening.

Pride Marked In Tucson

TUCSON (Observer Update) - June 26 will mark the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots and the beginning of the modern LGBT rights movement. Cities and towns across the globe will be holding events and festivals to mark this important occasion. In the Old Pueblo, a series of events are being held to mark LGBT Pride in Southern Arizona, being overseen by Tucson Pride, and they are scheduled from June 17-27.

Wed, June 17, Doors open at 6:30 p.m. An Evening with Wicked author Gregory Maguire, The Loft Cinema-3233 East Speedway Blvd. The Pima County Public Library presents author Gregory Maguire as part of its Annual GLBT Author event. Maguire will present a talk on the creation of the Wicked series and will read from his books. Mr. Maguire will sign books following the presentation.

Friday-Sunday, June 19-21, Bisbee Pride (bisbeepride.com). Kick off Pride Week and join Tucson Pride as we celebrate LGBT Pride in Bisbee. Though located in a small town, Bisbee Pride is big on fun, entertainment, and great people who are excited to welcome you to their amazing town.

Friday, June 19, Gaystock, The Biz - 2900 East Broadway Blvd. Join us at the Biz for an evening of peace, love, and understanding that spans generations.

Saturday, June 20, 9:00 p.m. Boys R Us presents "All Eyes on Me," at the Hotel Congress - 311 East Congress Street. Bold and Bold and daring, Boys R Us dives in to the spirit of Pride and reveals whats underneath. Sex, Politics and Pride - we're pulling no stops, holding no bars - celebrate your pride with the boys at Club Congress.

Sunday, June 21, 4:00 - 9:00 p.m. Colors - 5305 East Speedway Blvd. Join Colors for dinner at Colors. Colors will donate 10% of your pre-tax food and beverage order to TIHAN.

Tuesday, June 23, Eon Dinner and a Movie, Eon Youth Lounge - Call (520) 620-6245 for directions. Join Eon for dinner and a movie at the Eon Youth Lounge. Event open to youth 23 years of age and younger.

Tuesday, June 23, 8:00 p.m., Girlyman, Hotel Congress- 311 East Congress Street. Club Congress celebrates Pride Week with one of the nation's best acts, Girlyman. Great harmonies and great music are hallmarks of Atalnta Ga's Girlyman, bouyed by a nation of rabid "Girlyfans". A fantastic night of music and fun. Must be 21 or older to attend. To purchase tickets visit hotelcongress.com

Wednesday, June 24, Wingspan Night Out at The Claim Jumper-3761 East Broadway Blvd. Join Wingspan for a night of food, drinks, and fabulous gaiety at the Claim Jumper restaurant at El Con Mall. Claim Jumper will donate 10% of your pre-tax food and beverage order to Wingspan when you present the event flyer to your server. Wingspan is not allowed to hand the flyer out on the night, so please visit wingspan.org to download and print your very own and hand to your server on the night. Call (520) 795-2900 to make a reservation.

Thursday, June 25, Steak Night at the Venture-N- 1239 North Sixth Avenue. Join us at Venture-N and get your steak on!

Friday, June 26, Family Tradition Fundraiser at the Coyote Moon - 915 West Prince Road. A fundraiser to assist the Observer, our local community newspaper, in continued service. It's a night of country music, dancing, performances, and raffles. Join us for some Friday Fun!

Saturday, June 27, Wet Party at Woody's -3710 North Oracle Road. Join Woody's on June 27th from 8 p.m. until close for their monthly Wet Party. Check website and myspace for updates. (myspace.com/4mywoodys)
For more information, Tucsonpride.org.

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Pride Hit By Recession Cutbacks

PHILADELPHIA, PA (Observer Update) - The leaders of the "Sunday Out" festival watched thousands brighten a gray day in early May by celebrating in the wet Philadelphia streets with multicolored umbrellas, rainbow-hued hats and colorful necklaces in the name of Gay pride, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. But the mood darkened for the event's sponsor, Equality Forum, when a new bill arrived later: $17,000 for police, street cleaning and ambulance services that for years the city had provided for free.

Cash-strapped Philadelphia says it can no longer waive the costs of city services for festival organizers, and the national forecast is similarly cloudy for other events. Small festivals and huge parades alike are scaling back, stepping up fundraising or even considering canceling as they worry about how to survive under new financial realities:

In New York, officials aren't accepting new applications for multi-block or multi-day events because of police overtime costs, said city spokeswoman Evelyne Erskine. The city is also raising fees for promotional events, charging as much as $38,000 for a large event. For street fairs, New York charges 20 percent of the vendor fees collected. That netted the city $1.6 million in 2007.

In Boston, the city says organizers of the Sail Boston tall ships event must pay nearly $1 million in public safety costs because the city can no longer afford it.

In Detroit, Gov. Jennifer Granholm plans to end state funding for the Michigan State Fair after this year. Fairs also have been canceled in the Detroit-area cities of Novi and Utica.

In New Jersey, the popular Appel Farm outdoor music festival in Elmer was canceled because of decreased state funding and fundraising struggles. Other towns are canceling or shortening fireworks shows.

The challenge is stark in Philadelphia, where many groups paid nothing for years. The city gets requests for about 1,200 events a year, and costs for city services can range from a few thousand dollars for a small event to several hundred thousand dollars for a large parade. The city often waived those costs in the past, taking into consideration an event's economic impact and community pride. But that cost the city millions, and with revenues down, those days are done.

"The party's over for now, but in a good way," said Jazelle Jones, the city's deputy managing director, whose office is still trying to tally how much money will be saved. In addition to money, community groups worry about morale. Without festivals, a group's visibility declines; fundraising, membership and community pride can go down with it.

That's why Zakariyya Abdur Rahman decided to push forward with the Give Back to the Community summer festival in the city's Nicetown section - even though his group will have to pay thousands more this year. "It's very impactful for this community," Abdur-Rahman said.

Late last year, a highly publicized dispute about paying for city services threatened to cancel the Mummers Parade, a century-old Philadelphia tradition in which costumed revelers march through the city on New Year's Day. Mayor Michael Nutter and the city withdrew thousands of dollars in support - including prize money- and asked parade organizers to pay about $50,000 in service costs. Both sides eventually agreed on a compromise that shortened the parade to 6 1/2 hours, and the Mummers made up the difference in donations.

On a frigid New Year's Day 2009, crowds were thinner because of the cold, but the parade went on - although not without some frustration over the cuts. A group called Froggy Carr, marching with black-and-white and green frog umbrellas, had a sign that read: "Frog U Mayor Nutter." Andre Bright, president of the National Pan-Hellenic Council of Philadelphia, wondered what cuts would mean for the Greek Picnic, a large summer festival organized by black fraternities. "I thought, 'Oh, my God, if they're going to stop the Mummers Parade, what are they going to do to us?'" said Bright, who estimates his event has 60/40 odds of happening this year. "It just does seem kind of odd to me that the city would basically pass off a $25,000 bill to us when we bring in at least twice that amount."

The Gay rights group Equality Forum got sticker shock shortly before its annual Sunday Out street festival on May 3. Not only did the group owe about $17,000 for services, the city was no longer able to offer a $115,000 grant. But Malcolm Lazin, Equality Forum's executive director, said the group found out about the extra costs too late to make changes this year. "From a financial standpoint, it was devastating," Lazin said. Next year, the group may charge an admission fee, promote less or move to a location where police aren't needed.

In the past, Philadelphia has been inconsistent in whether it has charged or not charged groups for services; not everyone has gotten services for free. Groups that paid for years say it's about time the city started charging everyone. The West Oak Lane Jazz Festival has paid for city services like police and EMS since its inception in 2004 and expects to shell out about $150,000 this year. Organizers were shocked when they learned not everyone else was paying. "When I found that out, I said, 'Yo, guys, come on,'" said Jack Kitchen, president and CEO of the event's sponsor, Ogontz Avenue Revitalization Corp. "You have to expect to pay for services in this economy."

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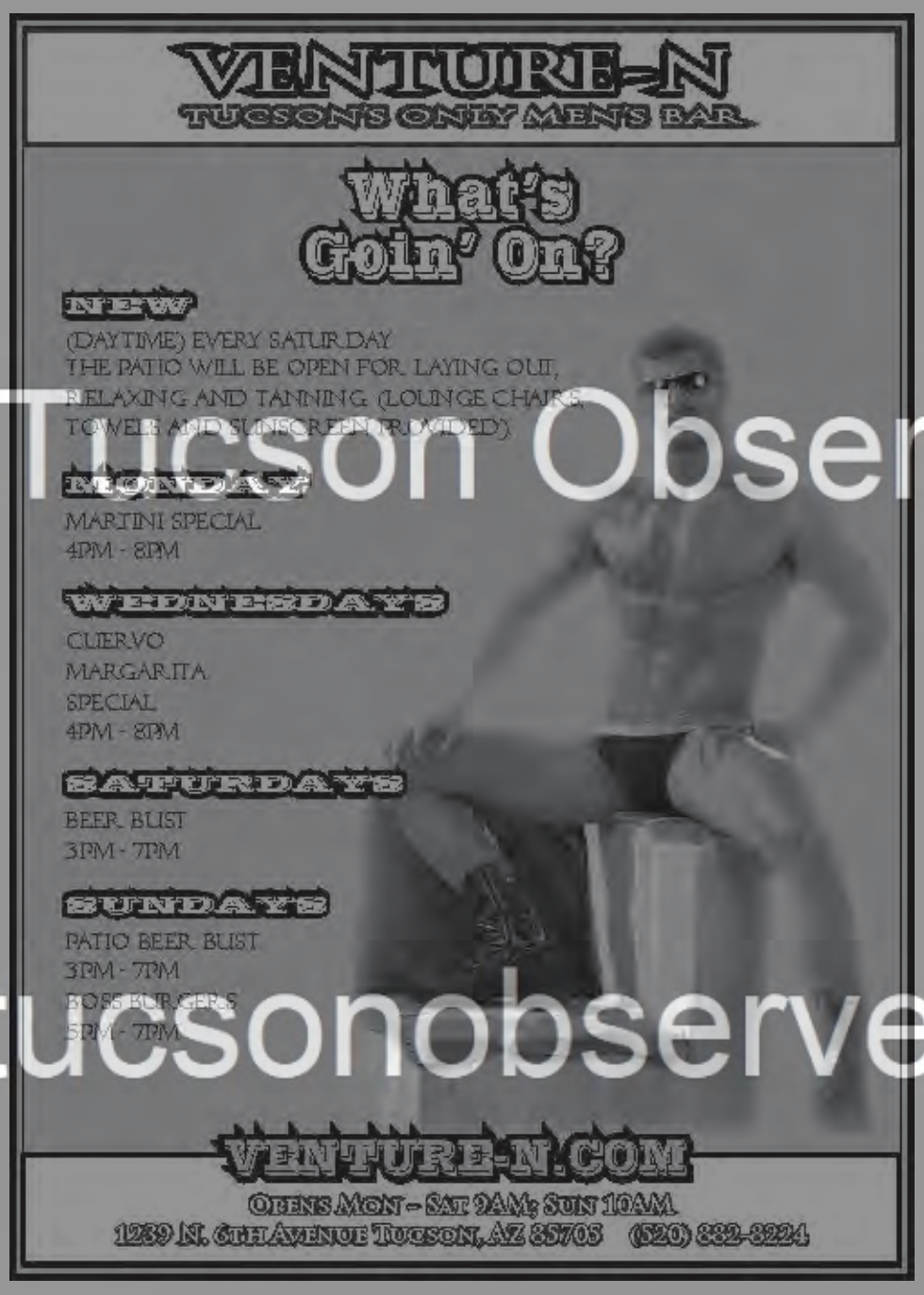
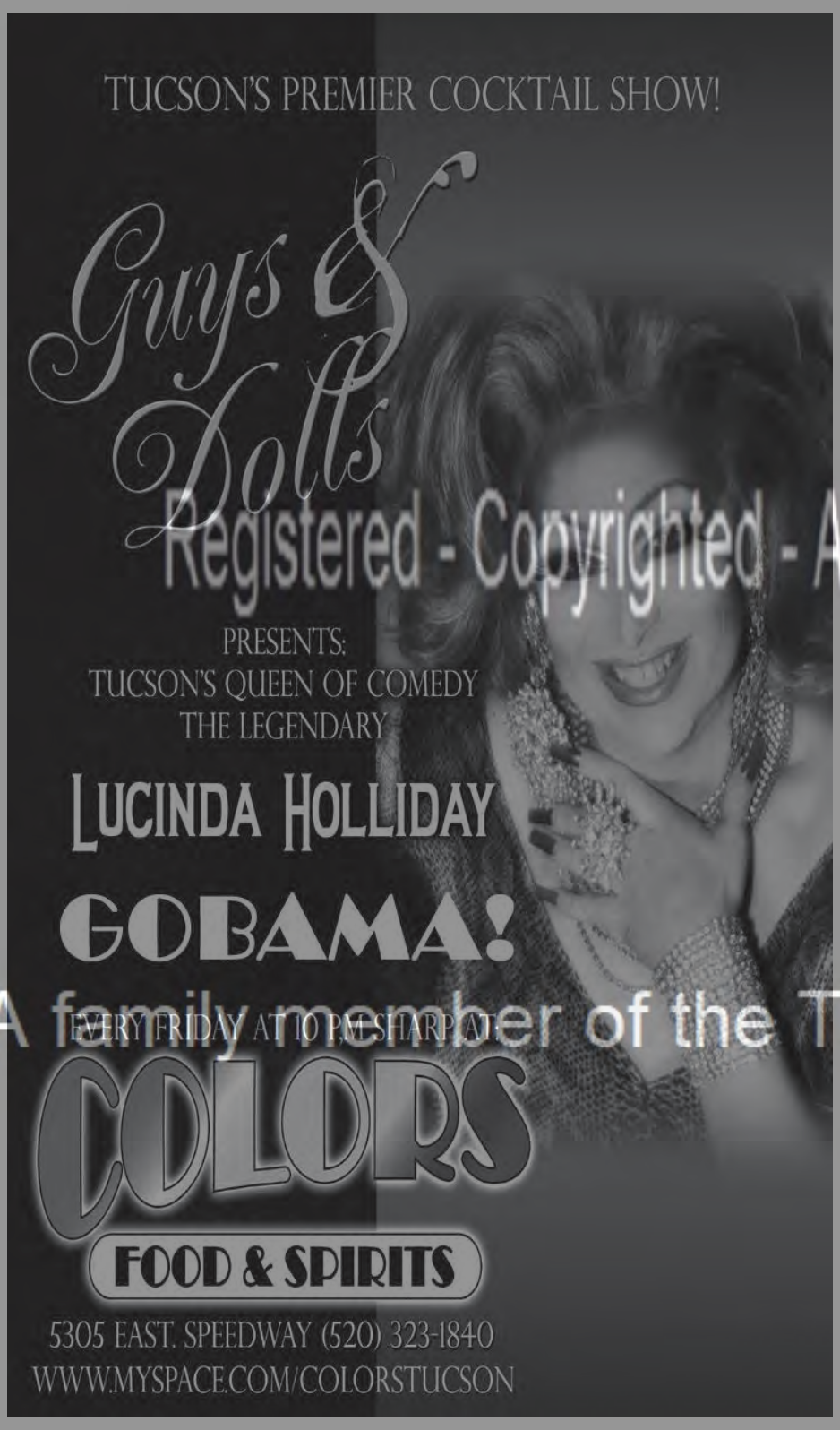




COMMENTARY. . .

Air Force Boots Their 25 Million Dollar Aviator (He's Gay)

By Aubrey Sarvis

New President. New Congress. No Change. Here is the latest evidence of what our country is losing under the law that prevents Gay men and women from serving openly in the armed forces of the United States. Lieutenant Colonel Victor J. Fehrenbach, a fighter weapons systems officer, has been flying the F-15E Strike Eagle since 1998. He has flown numerous missions against Taliban and al-Qaida targets, including the longest combat mission in his squadron's history. On that infamous September 11, 2001, Lt. Col. Fehrenbach was handpicked to fly sorties above the nation's capital. Later he flew combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. He has received at least 30 awards and decorations including nine air medals, one of them for heroism, as well as campaign medals for Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He is now a flight instructor in Idaho, where he has passed on his skills to more than 300 future Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force weapons systems officers.

Since 1987, when Fehrenbach entered Notre Dame on a full Air Force ROTC scholarship, the government has invested twenty-five million dollars in training and equipping him to serve his country, which he has done with what anyone would agree was great distinction. He comes from a military family. His father was a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, his mother an Air Force nurse and captain. Lt. Col. Fehrenbach has honored that tradition. And the Air Force is about to discharge this guy, a virtual poster boy for Air Force recruiting, because he is Gay? Someone has to be kidding. This is sheer madness. But Lt. Col. Fehrenbach does not have to be discharged. There is something the Pentagon can and should do now. Lt. Col. Fehrenbach's commanders and senior commanders can retain him in the service. Individual commanders are allowing many Gays and Lesbians to continue to serve openly in the armed forces. They are doing so because these are good service members who are doing their jobs. Lt. Col .Fehrenbach is no danger to unit cohesion, or to morale, or to good order and discipline. He goes to work every day, does a fantastic job for his country, has all the medals and job performance evaluations to prove it, and he should be allowed to serve.

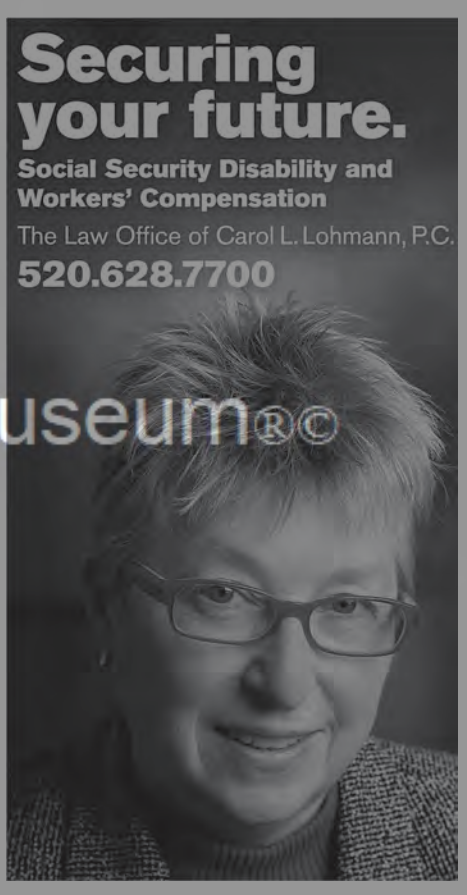
Is the discharge of an officer with such critical and valuable skills, whom the government has spent millions training, is that really what Congress intended when it gave us "don't ask, don't tell"? Only last week, Defense Secretary Robert Gates told members of Congress, "If we don't get the people part of this business right, none of our other decisions will matter." Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Congress, "This is how we take care of our people." He should have said, "This is how we take care of some of our people," because neither Secretary Gates nor Admiral Mullen could have been thinking of the 65,000 Gays and Lesbians in uniform today. Certainly they were not thinking of Lt. Col. Fehrenbach when they talked about "getting the people part right" because they got the "people part" wrong.

Watching Gates and Mullen on the Hill last week, you could see what President Obama is up against. They know how to deliver great performances. They know very well that their new Commander in Chief wants to get rid of "don't ask, don't tell." They know the President needs their help to accomplish it. So far, to put it gently, they have not been particularly helpful. "Dragging their feet" best describes what they've been doing, and the President, waiting on his military, finds himself in a box. In an Associated Press story, reporter Lara Jakes quoted Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell as saying that both Secretary Gates and Admiral Mullen are "aware of where the President wants to go on this issue, but I don't think that there is any sense of any immediate developments in the offing on efforts to repeal don't ask-don't tell." Does this mean they know where the President wants to go but they're not going there? It doesn't sound as if the President has made a lot of progress in getting the Pentagon players on his team.

The impending discharge of Lt. Col. Fehrenbach, an 18-year combat aviator, and the likely discharge of First Lieutenant Dan Choi , an Arabic speaking Army platoon leader, put real faces on this sad unfolding drama. These two service members and scores of others are paying an enormous price while grown men and women in Washington do their political dance. And make no mistake, Congress is in on this dance, too. It is their "don't ask, don't tell" law. They passed it; they own it. Only they can repeal it. Let's be fair and accurate here. This is far more complicated than a simple stroke of the presidential pen. If an Executive Order to temporarily suspend DADT discharges would work on all fronts, for all service members, I would be all for it. But we need a real, lasting fix.

A law is a law, even a bad law. Our country and service members are suffering the consequences as we watch this theater of the absurd play out. We need this new 111th Congress and this new President to engage each other immediately and with a sense of urgency to stop this obvious madness. What is happening in the United States military today is not the 17th century witch trials in Salem - nobody has been hanged on Gallows Hill - but it's not what most Americans think of as just or fair in a country that prides itself as having the best justice system in the world. Lt. Col. Fehrenbach has just made his case before the American people on MSNBC's Rachel Maddow Show tonight. Let the 25 Million Dollar Aviator serve!

(Aubrey Sarvis is the Executive Director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network and this oped is reprinted from the Huffington Post.)



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White House: 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Under Review

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The White House is insisting that officials are working to overturn a policy that bans Gays and Lesbians from serving openly in the military, pushing back against Pentagon assessments a day earlier that such efforts were low priorities and Democratic activists' complaint of slow progress, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

White House spokesman Robert Gibbs told reporters that President Barack Obama is committed to reversing the Clinton-era policy of "don't ask, don't tell," which blocks Gays' service if they disclose their sexual orientation. Congress would have to take action to change the policy. Recent polls indicate the ban and the "don't ask, don't tell" policy are losing support.

"Try as one may, a president can't simply whisk away standing law of the United States of America," Gibbs said. "But if you're going to change the policy, if it is the law of the land, you have to do it through an act of Congress."

The administration has drawn criticism from Gay and Lesbian activists for not moving quickly enough to repeal the policy. Democratic activists and fundraisers met last weekend in Texas to coordinate an online campaign known as the Dallas Principles to prod the president. "We face a historic opportunity to obtain our full civil rights; this is the moment for change," the group said in a mission statement. "No delay. No excuses."

Bill Would Give Benefits To Same-Sex Partners Of Federal Workers

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Legislation has been introduced in the the House and Senate to provide benefits for same-sex domestic partners of federal civilian employees on the same basis as spousal benefits, reported 365Gay.com. The Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act is sponsored by Reps. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) in the House and Sens. Joe Lieberman (ID-CT) and Susan Collins (R-ME) in the Senate, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

The benefits would include participation in applicable retirement programs, life and health insurance benefits, and family and medical leave. "This legislation would allow the federal government to keep pace with other top employers," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "It is not only a matter of equal pay for equal work, but also the best way to ensure that the government has access to the top talent on the same basis as the nation's leading corporations."

Currently, 57 percent of Fortune 500 companies provide domestic partner benefits to their employees. Many of America's leading companies, including defense giant Raytheon, IBM, Microsoft, Shell Oil, Walt Disney, Fannie Mae, Citigroup, Xerox, Time Warner and United and American Airlines offer the benefits. In addition, 16 states and over 200 local governments offer their public employees domestic partnership benefits.

Meanwhile, at a House committee markup on the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Chairman Howard Berman reiterated Secretary of State Clinton's commitment to provide equal benefits to the same-sex partners of US diplomats stationed overseas. The benefits would include medical care, transport between postings and security training to partners.

G/L Homeowners Turn To DIY Projects In Economic Downturn

NEW YORK CITY, NY (Observer Update) - In the economic downturn that has seen a drop in home sales, Gay and Lesbian homeowners are increasingly turning to home improvement projects rather than moving, reported 365Gay.com. A new national study has found that Gay couples plan to spend 50 percent more on home improvement projects than non-Gay couples over the next 12 months.

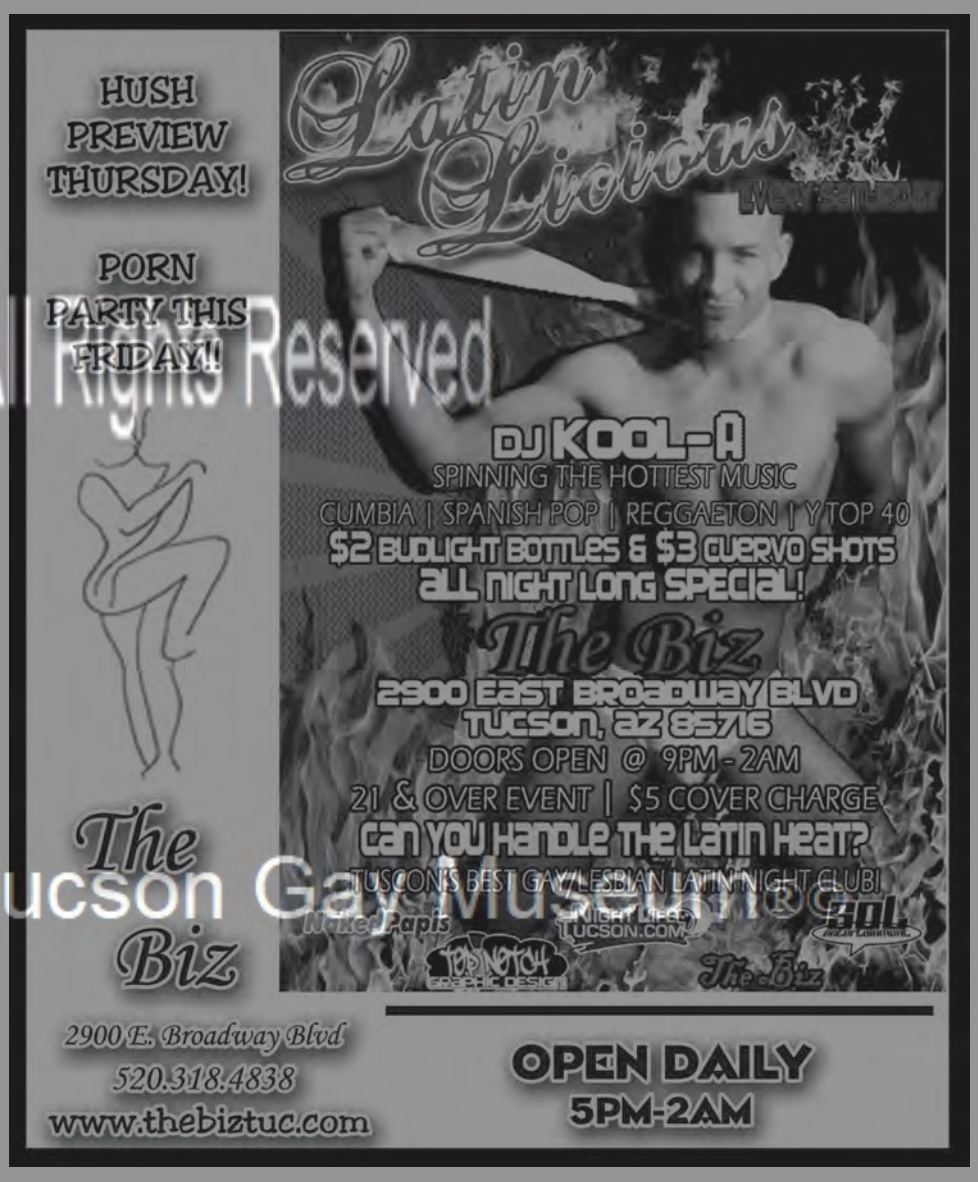
These study was undertaken by the Chicago-based, online research agency, Socratic Technologies and Target 10, a Gay and Lesbian marketing agency based in New York. "Gay couples planning home improvement projects lead the way when it comes to spending," the study's authors said in a statement. LGBT homeowners intend to spend an average of $2,077 within the next 12 months while non-Gay couples intend to spend only $1,384, according to the findings. "With 63 percent of Gay homeowners intending to start home improvement projects within the next 12 months, it's not surprising that more than half also plan on purchasing more new home appliances or furnishings within a year's time."

The kitchen in particular is high on the "to do" list. In the next 12 months, 34 percent of Gay homeowners reported that they intend to replace a kitchen appliance vs. 27 percent of straight homeowners. "Gay men and Lesbians have a reputation of being major home improvement shoppers and this survey reaffirms that," said Matt Tumminello, president of Target 10. "Renovating and refurbishing homes is in many ways a part of Gay culture. Even in bad economic times, they are not stopping." Over the last three years, 72 percent of Gay homeowners had made home improvements.

The survey also uncovered some interesting findings on how consumers shop. "We found that Gay consumers are shopping in more places than straight consumers to find the items that they want. This includes both at retail stores and online," said Jeff Kerr, vice president of Socratic Technology. Gay consumers reported higher rates of shopping and purchasing at Home Depot, Lowe's, Sears, Best Buy and the warehouse shopping club, Costco. "They are savvy shoppers who are determined to find exactly what they want and at the best price," Kerr said.

The survey also found that Gay consumers are looking for high-end products. Homeowners were significantly more likely to seek out products from top-tier brands such as Viking, Sub Zero, Jenn-Air and Miele. And while non-Gay homeowners showed a willingness to use less expensive materials during the economic downturn, this is something most Gay consumers are not willing to do.

But the survey discovered that most companies have been slow to go after Gay consumers. "In the last few years we've noticed very few household appliance and home improvement brands taking steps to court Gay consumers and no one brand has emerged as a market leader," said Tumminello. "Gays and Lesbians are famous for their brand loyalty and an opportunity exists to fill that void. Those first in, win."



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POLITICS 2009

by Mark R. Kerr

Count, Serve And Be Remembered

For Gays and Lesbians to actually count as individuals or couples by the government (at least in each Census), to be able to serve in the military and to be remembered, it is time to speak out and up for their rights as individuals, citizens and couples.

With the approval by the U.S. Congress and the signature of then President Bill Clinton of the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996, as well as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," the policy prohibiting Gays and Lesbians from serving openly and honestly in the country's armed services in 1993, more Congressional action would be necessary to undo was enacted into law and to be a full part of this country and not just a rating's grabber, for the media, come November, February and May of each respective year.

Open Lesbian Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Tammy Baldwin, D-WI and 52 other House Members (including Arizona Democratic Congressman Raul Grijalva) have sent a letter to Peter Orszag, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and in charge of the U.S. Census, urging that Gay and Lesbian couples be counted in the upcoming Census in 2010.

Contact Mr. Orszag and let him know Gay and Lesbian Couples must be counted. Either through postal mail at The Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503, Phone (202) 395-3080, Fax (202) 395-3888 or at whitehouse.gov/contact and put in subject line "Gay and Lesbian couples must be counted in Census!"

Meanwhile, legislation introduced (H.R. 2460) in Congress requiring most employers to provide at least seven days of paid sick leave a year for most employees could be a major boon to same-sex families. U.S. Representative Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) filed the Healthy Families Act, which would include all companies with 15 or more workers and guarantee employees one-paid hour off for each 30 hours worked, enabling them to earn up to seven paid sick days a year. Employees could use the leave provided by the Act to attend to their own medical needs or the medical needs of children, parents, spouses or any other individual "whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship."

H.R. 2460 was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and House Administration. Call or E-mail your Member of Congress at house.gov, senate.gov or callcongress.org to let them know to support this measure.

After hedging, hemming and hawing, the White House, after considerable pressure put on by interest groups, progressive media outlets and from the resulting fallout from news accounts of individuals who served their country in the military where fired for being Gay or Lesbian, has stated that the 16-year old policy, known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," is under review and that a policy to overturn the measure is being worked on.

Take action by going online to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network website, sldn.org/action and tell President Obama, the U.S. Congress and the military that "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" must be overturned. Since his inauguration and the swearing in of the 111th Congress in January of this year alone, more than 200 servicemembers, who have served this country admirably, have been fired for being Gay or Lesbian.

H.R. 2517, also known as the Domestic Partners Benefits and Obligations Act of 2009, was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives, to give the domestic partners of federal employees the same benefits, and require of them the same obligations, as the spouses of federal employees.

Sponsored by open Lesbian Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, D-WI, H.R. 2517 would require same-sex domestic partners of federal employees living in a committed relationship, be eligible for benefits such as health care, long-term care, family and medical leave, and federal retirement benefits. Domestic partners would also be subject to the same responsibilities as the spouses of federal employees, such as financial disclosure requirements and anti-nepotism policies.

H.R. 2517 has been assigned to the House Judiciary Committee for consideration. U.S. Representative John Conyers, D-MI, a longtime friend and supporter of the community is the Chair of the Judiciary Committee, but he needs to be contacted on this bill to get hearings scheduled. Representative Conyers can be reached online at his Congressional website at the following address: conyers.house.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Contact.OnlineContactForm.

ACLU: Censored Student Report On Harvey Milk

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Observer Update) - The American Civil Liberties Union is threatening to sue a San Diego County school that refused to let a student present a report on slain Gay rights leader Harvey Milk until her classmates got their parents' permission to hear it, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com. David Blair-Loy, legal director of the ACLU of San Diego County, said the principal of Mt. Woodson Elementary School in Ramona violated the free speech rights of 6th-grader Natalie Jones, who was the only student in her class prevented from giving an in-class presentation.

Principal Theresa Grace concluded last month that the subject of the girl's project triggered a district policy requiring parents to be notified in writing before their children are exposed to lessons dealing with sex, according to Blair-Loy and Natalie's mother. After the principal sent letters to alert parents about the "sensitive topic," Natalie was allowed to give her 12-page PowerPoint report during the May 8 lunch recess, but not in class, Blair-Loy said. Eight of the 13 students in her class attended, he said.

In a letter to the Ramona Unified District on Wednesday, the ACLU demanded that school officials apologize to Natalie and clarify its sex education policy. It also wants the girl to be given the chance to present her biographical account of Milk's life and death in class. "It's not about sex, it's not about sex education. It's a presentation about a historical figure who happened to be Gay," Blair-Loy said. The school district superintendent did not immediately respond to a telephone call and e-mail from The Associated Press.

Milk became one of the first Gay men elected to political office in the United States in 1977 when he won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He was assassinated a year later along with Mayor George Moscone. Former supervisor Dan White was convicted of voluntary manslaughter for the killings. A bill passed recently by the California Legislature would establish Milk's May 22 birthday as an annual "day of significance" in the state, a move designed to encourage schools to discuss his career and legacy.

Bonnie Jones said her daughter was inspired to choose Milk as the subject of her research report after seeing the movie "Milk," which earned Academy Awards for actor Sean Penn and screenwriter Dustin Lance Black. "First my daughter got called into the principal's office as if she were in some kind of trouble, and then they treated her presentation like it was something icky," Jones said in a statement. "Harvey Milk was an elected official in this state and an important person in history," Jones added. "To say my daughter's presentation is sex education because Harvey Milk happened to be Gay is completely wrong."

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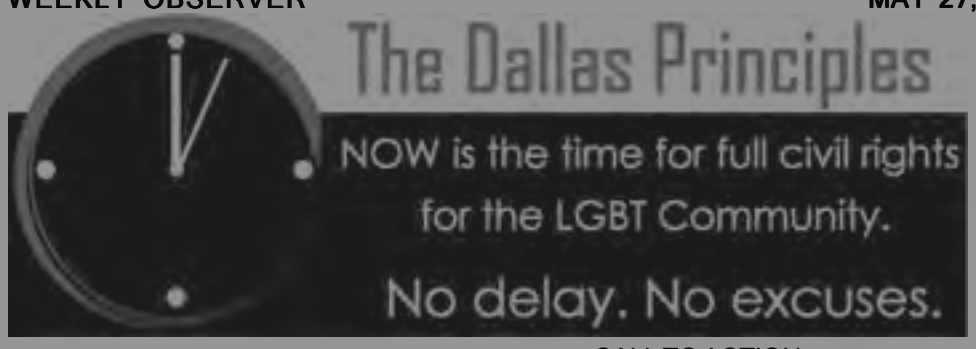


LIST OF ATTENDEES: Juan Ahonen-Jover, Ken Ahonen-Jover, John Bare, Jarrett Barrios, Dana Beyer, Jeffrey Campagna, Mandy Carter, Michael Coe, Jimmy Creech, Allison Duncan, Joe Falk, Michael Guest, Joanne Herman, Donald Hitchcock, Lane Hudson, Charles Merrill, Dixon Osburn, Lisa Polyak, Babs Siperstein, Pam Spaulding, Andy Szekeres, Lisa Turner, Jon Winkleman, and Paul Yandura.

PRINCIPLES

The following eight guiding principles underlie our call to action. In order to achieve full civil rights now, we avow:

1. Full civil rights for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender individuals must be enacted now. Delay and excuses are no longer acceptable.

2. We will not leave any part of our community behind.

3. Separate is never equal.

4. Religious beliefs are not a basis upon which to affirm or deny civil rights.

5. The establishment and guardianship of full civil rights is a non-partisan issue.

6. Individual involvement and grassroots action are paramount to success and must be encouraged.

7. Success is measured by the civil rights we all achieve, not by words, access, or money raised.

8. Those who seek our support are expected to commit to these principles.

FULL CIVIL RIGHTS GOALS

Being united by common principles and engaging in united action, we will achieve the following goals:

1. DIGNITY AND EQUALITY. Every Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender person has inherent dignity and worth, and has the right to live free of discrimination and harassment.

2. FAMILY. Every LGBT person has the right to a family without legal barriers to immigration, civil marriage, or raising children.

3. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY. Every LGBT person has the right to economic opportunity free from discrimination in employment, public housing, accommodation, public facilities, credit, and federally funded programs and activities.

4. EDUCATION. Every LGBT child and youth has the right to an education that is affirming, inclusive, and free from bullying.

5. NATIONAL SECURITY. Every LGBT person should have the opportunity to serve our country openly and equally in our military and foreign service.

6. CRIME. Every LGBT person should enjoy life protected against bias crimes.

7. HEALTH CARE. Every person should have access to affordable, high quality, and culturally competent health care without discrimination.

CALL TO ACTION

1. We demand that government officials act now to achieve full civil rights without delay.

2. Our organizations and individuals need to develop a collaborative and revolutionary new organizing model that mobilizes millions of supporters through emerging Web and phone technologies.

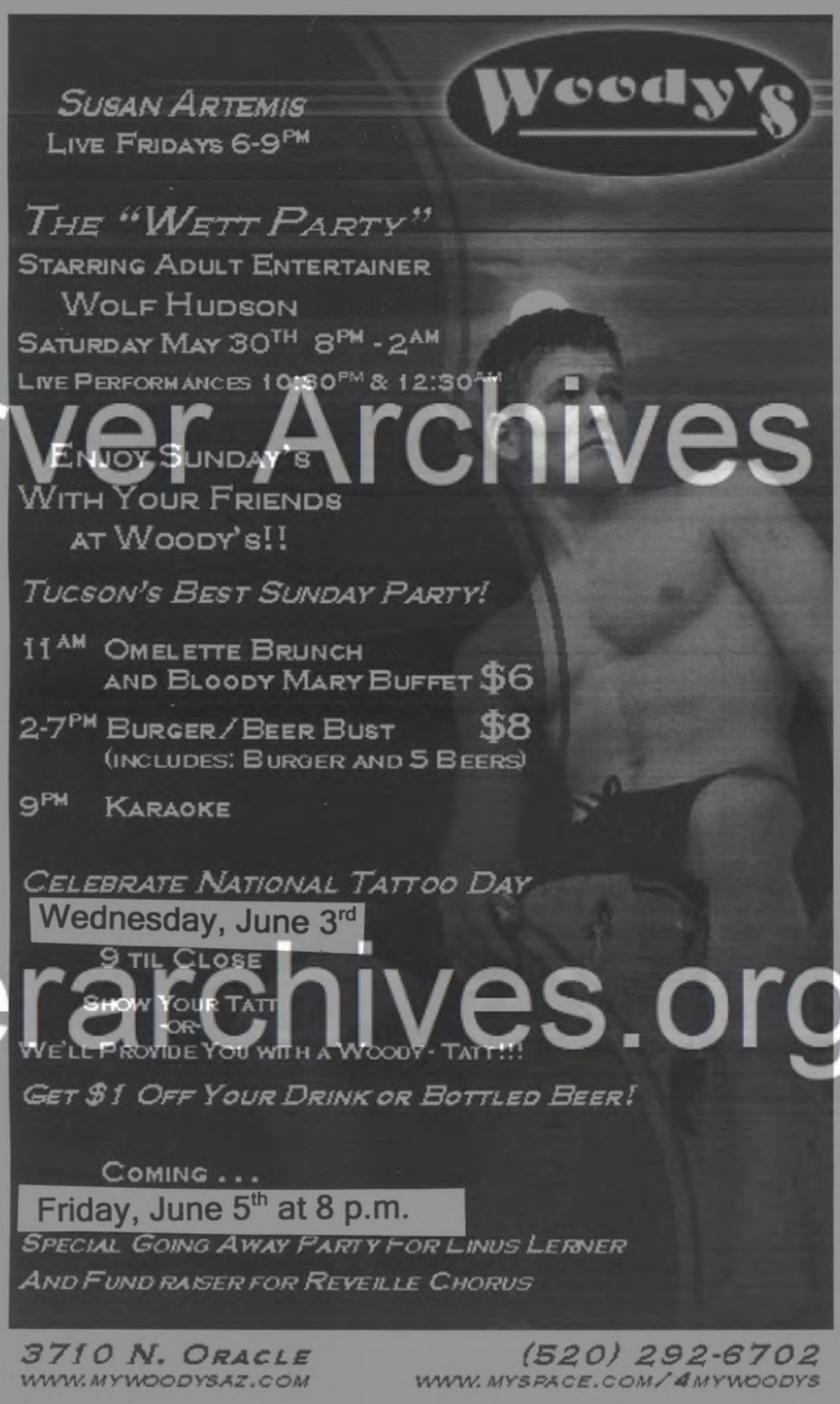
3. All LGBT individuals must accept personal responsibility to do everything within their power for equality and should get involved in the movement by volunteering, giving, and being out.

4. We will hold elected officials and our organizations accountable for being transparent and achieving full civil rights by active participation when possible and active opposition when necessary.

5. Our allies need to be proactive in public support for full civil rights.

6. Every government measure that quantifies the U.S. citizenry must permit LGBT individuals to self-identify and be counted in every way citizens are counted.

7. We demand that the media present LGBT lives in fair, accurate, and objective ways that neither include nor give credence to unsubstantiated, discriminatory claims and opinions.



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Around The Nation

Settlement In Lesbian Student Harassment Case

VALLEJO, CA (Observer Update) - A settlement has been reached between a student, who claimed she had faced anti-Gay harassment and discrimination from teachers and school staff, and the Vallejo City Unified School District, 365Gay.com reported. The settlement was reached by the American Civil Liberties Union and includes district-wide anti-harassment training for students and staff.

Rochelle Hamilton, who came out as a Lesbian when she was 13, complained that among other forms of discrimination she was required to participate in a school-sponsored "counseling" group designed to discourage students from being Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender. "All I ever wanted was to be able to go to school and just be myself. But I couldn't do that when the people I was supposed to be learning from were judging me and telling me something was wrong with me. How was I supposed to learn when I was constantly scared?" said Hamilton in a statement provided by the ACLU announcing the settlement.

As a result of the settlement, the district will adopt a clear policy explicitly prohibiting discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, as required by California law; develop a specific procedure for harassment and discrimination complaints; provide mandatory training for all teachers and other staff who interact with students in how to identify anti-Gay harassment and discrimination, why it's harmful, and how to prevent it; and provide mandatory anti-harassment training to all students in the district, as well as taking other steps to make the district a more welcoming environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender students.

School district spokesperson Jason Hodge said the district's own investigation did not support Hamilton's allegations but district officials agreed their policies could be strengthened.

Survivor's Home Protection Act Advances In California

SACRAMENTO, CA (Observer Update) - California legislation to protect LGBT partners, particularly seniors, from having to pay unfair property taxes following the death of their partner, has passed a key committee vote, 365Gay.com reported. The Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee passed the bill by a vote of 6-3. It now moves to Assembly Appropriations Committee.

"No person should be taxed out of their home because of a discriminatory law," said Equality California Executive Director Geoff Kors. "This bill will help ensure that people do not risk losing their home when their partner dies. To add the loss of one's home to the devastation suffered from the loss of a loved one is unconscionable." Under current law, spouses and Registered Domestic Partners avoid paying property tax increases on their home following the death of one partner.

However, a number of senior LGBT couples who have faced decades of discrimination and even violence, have been reluctant to register for domestic partnerships, as their records then become readily available through the Secretary of State – making their sexual orientation a matter of public record. By contrast, straight couples are offered the option of a confidential marriage, allowing their records to remain confidential. As a result, senior LGBT couples are at greater risk for unequal treatment under the law, said Kors.

"This bill will help protect LGBT seniors from facing further discrimination and injustice," said Assemblymember Kevin de Leon (D). "Because marriage is not currently an option for all committed, loving couples, we must pass this important law that helps bridge the gulf of discrimination."

Illinois Expected To Approve Civil Unions

SPRINGFIELD, IL (Observer Update) - The Illinois legislature is expected to approve a measure to legalize civil unions for same-sex and heterosexual couples, according to the Washington Blade.

Rick Garcia, political director for Equality Illinois, told the newspaper that he "absolutely" expects the house and senate to pass a civil union measure, advocate.com reported.

According to Garcia, lawmakers will attempt to approve civil unions expediently before the end of the session on May 30. The house Youth and Family Committee, led by openly Gay representative Greg Harris, will attach an amendment legalizing civil unions to a "shell bill" already approved by the senate. If the house passes the legislation, it will move to the senate quickly for a concurrence vote Gov. Pat Quinn, a Democrat, supports the civil

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Judy Shepard Meets With Obama

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - As Gay activist David Mixner was calling for a national March on Washington to spur the Obama administration into action on Gay and Lesbian civil rights, the president was meeting with Judy Shepard in the Oval Office to discuss the Matthew Shepard Act. The bill, which would add sexual orientation and gender identity protections to the federal hate-crimes law, passed the U.S. House of Representatives in April and now awaits action in the Senate. President Obama, who first supported the bill as a senator, reiterated his support when he met with Shepard, reported advocate.com.

Shepard told The Advocate that she received the Obamas' invitation the same day White House press secretary Robert Gibbs told Advocate Washington correspondent Kerry Eleveld during a press briefing that he "didn't have the answer" to her question about repealing the antiGay Defense of Marriage Act. Upon arriving at the White House, Shepard first met with the president in the Oval Office. The meeting was short – "It was supposed to be 10 minutes, but his meeting beforehand ran long and I only had a minute or so with him," Shepard said. But it was long enough for Obama to assure Shepard that he was still a supporter of the hate-crimes bill named in honor of her son, a Gay man who was murdered in Laramie, Wyo., in 1998 at age 21.

She was then ushered to a luncheon hosted by Michelle Obama. "It was me and about 80 other people," she said, adding that she wasn't able to speak one-on-one with the first lady. Although she understands that many activists, like Mixner, are becoming increasingly frustrated with the White House, Shepard encourages people to be patient when it comes to LGBT legislation. "We are victims of our own hope," she says. "These bills are going to get passed, it's just going to take time and work." Right now, she says, that work means calling U.S. senators to urge them to both support the hate-crimes act and to discourage Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid from attaching it to the Department of Defense appropriations bill – a move Shepard believes could hinder its passage.

New Hampshire G/L Marriage Bill Delayed

CONCORD, NH (Observer Update) - Revisions in marriage equality legislation demanded by New Hampshire Gov. John Lynch before he signed the bill were stonewalled in the House Wednesday, after passing in the Senate, 365Gay.com reported. The original marriage bill passed the legislature earlier this month, but Lynch said he would veto it unless it offered better protections to churches that oppose same-sex marriage.

The revisions approved earlier in the Senate by a 14-10 vote would have made it clear that churches, church organizations and staff are protected from lawsuits if they refuse to permit same-sex marriages. But when it went to the House in the afternoon, it was defeated by only two votes - 188-186. The House then voted 207-168 to ask the Senate to negotiate a compromise with the governor instead of killing the bill.

"While the House voted not to adopt today's version of the amended marriage bill by a very close vote of 186-188, clearly the members of the House want to see marriage equality passed based on the strong vote not to kill it entirely. The House will now convene a conference committee to hash out differences in good faith in order to schedule another vote perhaps as soon as in the next two weeks," said HRC National Field Director Marty Rouse in a statement.

Among those in the House visitor's gallery for the vote were New Hampshire Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson and Mo Baxley of New Hampshire Freedom to Marry. Last month, the University of New Hampshire Survey Center released a statewide poll that found 55 percent of New Hampshire residents support Gay and Lesbian couples' right to marry, while 39 percent oppose it. If a compromise is reached and Lynch signs the bill it will make New Hampshire the sixth state to permit same-sex marriage and the fifth in New England.

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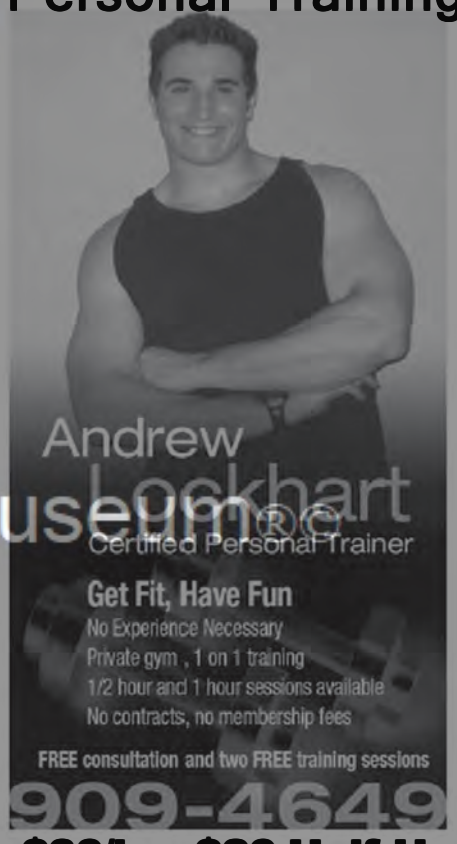

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Across The Q Globe

Nine Convicted Of Homosexuality In Senegal

DAKAR, Senegal (Observer Update) - (Dakar) Nine men, including a prominent activist, have been convicted of homosexual acts and sentenced to eight years in prison, a Gay rights group said, 365Gay.com reported.

Diadji Diouf, who heads an organization that provides HIV prevention services to Gay men in Senegal, and the others were arrested Dec. 19 in a raid on Diouf's apartment. The men were sentenced for unnatural acts and criminal conspiracy, said Joel Nana, Africa research and policy coordinator with the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission in Cape Town, South Africa. "This is the first case that we've heard of in Senegal where people actually got sentenced," Nana said. He called the sentences long and harsh. Diouf's organization, AIDES Senegal, provides condoms and HIV treatment out of his home.

The arrests came just weeks after Senegal hosted an international AIDS conference that included Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender participants. "It is a strong message of hatred, a strong message of division when we know it is critical at this point to address HIV in these communities," Nana said. Senegal, a primarily Muslim nation in West Africa, is one of 38 countries on the continent that criminalize homosexual acts, Nana said. South Africa prompted continentwide controversy in 2006 when it became the first African country to legalize Gay marriage.

Gay Foes Rally In Madrid

MADRID, Spain (Observer Update) - Tens of thousands of people attended a Mass in central Madrid just before Christmas designed to promote traditional family values in a predominantly Roman Catholic country that has legalized Gay marriage and made it easier for people to divorce.

The service began with a message from Pope Benedict XVI, who urged Spanish Catholics to keep their families strong. "Dear families, do not let love, openness to life and the incomparable links that join your homes weaken," the pope said in a message read out in Madrid. "The pope is by your side," the pontiff added. The archbishop of Madrid, Antonio Maria Rouco Varela, added: "the future of humanity depends on the family, the Christian family."

Spain's Socialist government has angered the church by legalizing Gay marriage, making it easy for people to divorce and instituting a public school course in which children learn about homosexuality and same-sex marriages. The Interior Ministry said it had no figure on attendance at Sunday's Mass in Colon Plaza. In chilly, overcast weather, the crowd filled the square and spilled out into streets running off it. Maria Rosa de la Cierva, leader of a church association representing Catholics in Madrid province, predicted before the Mass began that up to a million people would attend. The Mass was concelebrated by Rouco Varela along with five other archbishops, 22 bishops and more than 300 priests. A similar Mass and rally were held at this time last year in the same square, and organizers put attendance then at well over a million.

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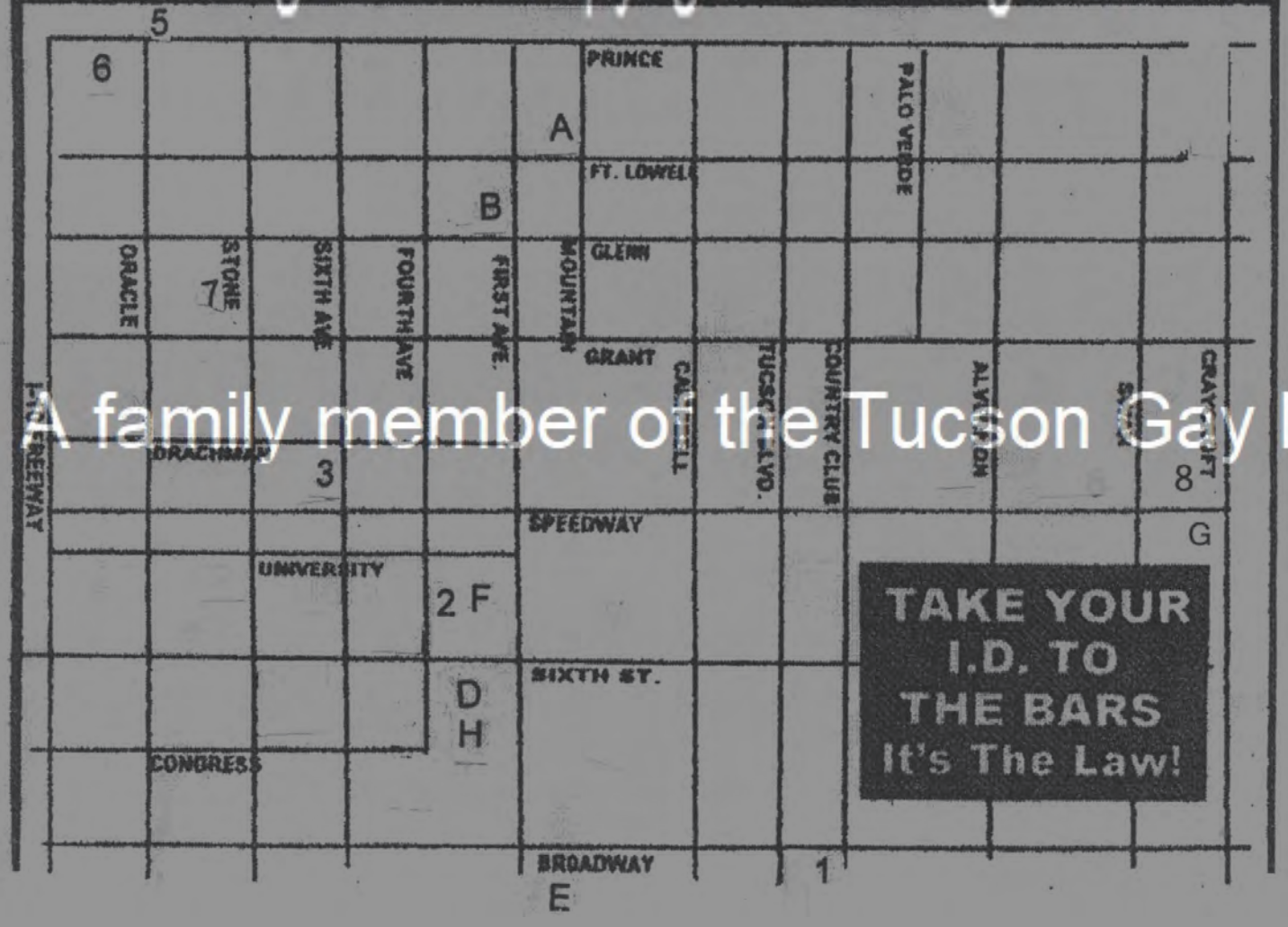

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Did Denny's Break The Law?

LEWISTON, ME (Observer Update) - A Transgender woman barred from using a Denny's restroom consistent with her gender identity was likely the victim of illegal discrimination under Maine law, an investigation by the state's human rights commission concluded, advocate.com reported. In 2007, Brianna Freeman of Lewiston, Maine, was told by a Denny's manager in nearby Auburn that she was not allowed to use the women's restroom following a complaint from an unidentified customer. The regional manager and director of operations for the restaurant chain later informed Freeman that she must use the men's restroom until her sex-reassignment surgery was complete.

Realty Resources Hospitality, which owns and operates six Denny's restaurants, denied discrimination against Freeman and argued that "allowing a biological male to use the female restroom despite gender identity will pose a direct threat to the health and well-being of staff and customers," according to the commission's report. But the panel dismissed Denny's argument that Freeman constituted a direct threat to other restaurant customers. In a statement to The Advocate, a Denny's Corp. representative said, "Denny's will obey all state laws and regulations in regard to restroom use. If state laws and regulations are ambiguous, Denny's handles incidents on a case-by-case basis with the utmost concern and consideration for our guests."

Chad Cloutier, an attorney representing Realty Resources Hospitality, said the ruling puts businesses in an "untenable position." "It really is a slippery slope. This claimant may be perfectly safe and use the bathroom in a perfectly normal way, but what's to prevent a person of some devious intent?" Cloutier told the Bangor Daily News. Though businesses and organizations accused of trans-exclusive restroom policies often invoke safety concerns, fears of sexual exposure and other illegal acts by Transgender people are baseless, said Kristina Wertz, legal director for the Transgender Law Center. "We are unaware of any instance where a Transgender person has taken bathroom access as an opportunity to be a predator. In reality it's Transgender individuals who are often the victims of violence and harassment in restrooms."

The Maine Human Rights Act protects citizens from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, which under state law includes "an individual's gender-related identity." Freeman's complaint is the first of its kind leveled with the Maine Human Rights Commission, according to the commission's executive director, Patricia E. Ryan. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia currently have laws forbidding discrimination on the basis of gender identity and or expression.

Governor Signs Colorado Benefits Bill

DENVER, CO (Observer Update) - Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter has signed legislation providing health insurance and other benefits to the same-sex partners of Colorado state workers, reported 365Gay.com.

Ritter put his pen to the bill without fanfare. Even the bill's chief sponsor, Rep. Mark Ferrandino (D) said he did not know the governor had signed it when contacted by the Denver Post. "It's an important piece of legislation that will help make sure the state can attract and retain good employees and compete with the private sector," Ferrandino told The Post.

Critics of the bill also were not informed in advance, infuriating the conservative Colorado Family Action. "We have no doubt the governor and fellow Colorado legislators heard vehement opposition from their constituents in regards to this bill," said Action spokesperson Jessica Langfeldt in a statement. "If the signing of Senate Bill 88 did not disregard the desires of the people, why was it signed in the dark of the night?"

Under the legislation, a state employee would have to be in a committed relationship for at least a year. Workers had been lobbying for the provision for several years but were fought by Republicans who argued it violated a 2006 referendum that defines marriage as a union of one man and one woman. GOP lawmakers also claimed it would cost too much and was discriminatory because it does not apply to unmarried opposite-sex couples who live together. The plan is expected to cost about $150,000 a year and will go into effect in July.

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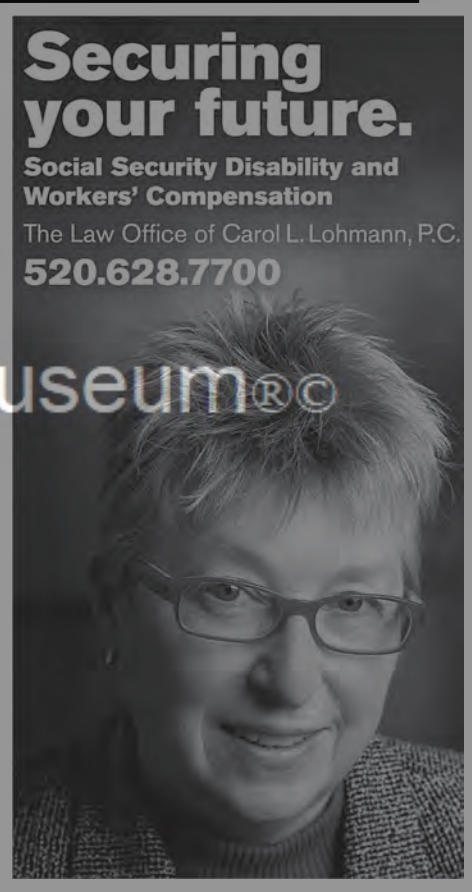
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Gay Mayor Resigns

Ex--San Angelo Mayor J. W. Lown

SAN ANGELO, TX (Observer Update) - J.W. Lown, who 10 days ago was overwhelmingly reelected to his fourth term as mayor of San Angelo, Texas, abruptly resigned on Wednesday in order to pursue a relationship with a man who is not an American citizen, reports the San Angelo Standard-Times .

Lown, 32, spoke to the newspaper by telephone from an undisclosed location in Mexico, where he and his partner are awaiting a visa to return legally to the United States. He said that he skipped his swearing-in ceremony on Tuesday because he did not want to take the oath of office knowing he was "aiding and assisting" someone who was not a citizen, advocate.com reported. "I made the final decision when I knew it was the right decision to make for me and my partner and our future – and for the community," he said.

Lown declined to identify his partner, but said the man came to the United States five years ago to attend Angelo State University in West-Central Texas. Their relationship began in the last two months. Mayor Lown officially tendered his resignation via a letter delivered to city manager Harold Dominguez. "While I know that the timing of this announcement is less than ideal, I have my own compelling reasons for making this decision," he wrote. "I have made thousands of decisions on behalf of our community, and I weighed this decision in the same manner that I approached other decisions." The San Angelo City Council must decide whether to appoint a new mayor or allow the position to remain vacant for six months until a new mayor can be elected in a special election in November.

Jamaicans: Boycott Hurting, Not Helping

KINGSTON, Jamaica (Observer Update) - Responding to rampant homophobia and violence against Gays in Jamaica, a small group recently launched a boycott of the island nation. But Gay leaders in Jamaica are saying the boycott is actually making things worse for the beleaguered LGBT residents there, reported advocate.com.

The South Florida Blade reports that Gay Jamaican leaders like Gareth Henry, cochair of the Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-sexuals, and Gays, say the boycott – which urges Gay consumers to not drink Jamaican alcohol products like Myers's Rum and Red Stripe beer and to not spend their travel dollars in the nation – is threatening to increase homophobic violence. "Already the boycott is being used as ammunition towards the Gay and Lesbian community," Henry tells the Blade . "While intentions are good, it's also hurting good people on the ground." Bars in New York and Los Angeles have already ceased serving Jamaican liquors. Henry is worried that if people start to lose jobs, Jamaicans could take out their anger on the Gay population.

But boycott proponents like Truth Wins Out director Wayne Besen say their actions are better than nothing, which they claim is what Jamaican Gay leaders are offering to quell the violence. Besen says he reached out to Henry's group only to be rebuffed. "We respect the opinions of those who do not believe we should be going through with this, but they have not provided any alternatives to the boycott," Besen tells the Blade. "We are open to people who put forth a better plan. If they spent half as much time organizing as they spend opposing us, then some dialogue could be had."

Jones: Let's March In October

NEW YORK CITY, NY (Observer Update) - Another voice for Gay rights is agitating for a march on Washington, D.C., this fall. Cleve Jones, cohort of the late politician Harvey Milk and creator of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, wrote a post on Towleroad calling for a massive gathering in October on National Coming Out Day, advocate.com.

"Sadly, at the very moment we are poised to reach our greatest goals, President Obama and the Democratic leaders of Congress have turned their backs, forgotten their promises, and betrayed our trust," he wrote. "In recent weeks House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has stated that repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act is 'not a priority.' President Obama has ignored the appeals of brave young people serving in our military as they are drummed out of the services for being Gay or Lesbian. Indeed, Lt. Daniel Choi, who recently 'came out' publicly, was dismissed from the Army even though he is a highly valued fluent Arabic speaker and a veteran of the Iraq war."

Jones added that the march should be about more than marriage equality, as Democratic strategist David Mixner suggested on his own blog. Instead, he said, the march should be a blanket Gay rights march, and include as many allies as possible from such movements as labor, racial equality, immigration rights, religious freedom, and others.

POET'S CORNER

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by Ron Rose - Tucson

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BUZZ -- BUZZ -- BUZZ

New Study Shows Pro- Marriage Legislators Win Elections

SACRAMENTO, CA (Observer Update) - California legislation to protect LGBT partners, particularly seniors, from having to pay unfair property taxes following the death of their partner, has passed a key committee vote, 365Gay.com reported. The Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee passed the bill by a vote of 6-3. It now moves to Assembly Appropriations Committee.

"No person should be taxed out of their home because of a discriminatory law," said Equality California Executive Director Geoff Kors. "This bill will help ensure that people do not risk losing their home when their partner dies. To add the loss of one's home to the devastation suffered from the loss of a loved one is unconscionable." Under current law, spouses and Registered Domestic Partners avoid paying property tax increases on their home following the death of one partner.

However, a number of senior LGBT couples who have faced decades of discrimination and even violence, have been reluctant to register for domestic partnerships, as their records then become readily available through the Secretary of State – making their sexual orientation a matter of public record. By contrast, straight couples are offered the option of a confidential marriage, allowing their records to remain confidential. As a result, senior LGBT couples are at greater risk for unequal treatment under the law, said Kors.

"This bill will help protect LGBT seniors from facing further discrimination and injustice," said Assemblymember Kevin de Leon (D). "Because marriage is not currently an option for all committed, loving couples, we must pass this important law that helps bridge the gulf of discrimination."

Hansis, Here! Score Daytime Emmy Nods

LOS ANGELES, CA (Observer Update) - The Daytime Emmy nominations were announced Thursday and As the World Turns star Van Hansis scored his third nomination for playing Gay college student Luke Snyder on the daytime drama, advocate.com reported. Here! Networks also scored a Daytime Emmy nomination for its 2008 Ribbon of Hope Celebration, a first for a Gay network.

Ribbon of Hope honors the television community's efforts to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS through programming – the event was nominated in the Outstanding Special Class Special category. Two other Gay favorites were nominated for Daytime Emmys. Eden Riegel, who just wrapped up a return stint playing Erica Kane's lesbian daughter Bianca on All My Children, scored a nod for her Web series Imaginary Bitches. Tamara Braun, who played her wife Reese on the soap, was nominated for her work on another show – Days of Our Lives.

The Daytime Emmys will air August 30 on the CW Network.

Nevada Gov. To Veto DP Bill

CARSON CITY, Nevada (Observer Update) - Governor Jim Gibbons has pledged to veto a bill passed by the legislature on Tuesday that would give same-sex domestic partners many of the same rights as married heterosexual couples, advocate.com reported.

Gibbons, a Republican, has up to five days to veto the bill. Both houses of the legislature are expected to override the veto. A spokesperson for Gibbons told the Reno Gazette-Journal that the governor will oppose the bill on the grounds that it involves government in residents' personal lives, and because existing laws already provide adequate domestic contract options.

Nevada voters twice approved a constitutional amendment to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, in 2000 and 2002. The domestic-partnership legislation specifies that the contracts are not marriages. The new legislation would give domestic partners, including same-sex couples, the same rights as married couples in estate planning, medical decisions, community property, and child care if they enter into a civil contract and obtain a state registration.

Openly Gay Man Elected To Colorado Senate

DENVER, CO (Observer Update) - Veteran Colorado LGBT activist Pat Steadman will become the first openly Gay man to serve in the Colorado state senate, local news sources report. Steadman won a special vacancy selection open to members of the state Democratic Party, advocate.com reported. He will replace the outgoing Sen. Jennifer Veiga, the first openly Gay person to serve in the state legislature. She resigned the seat to move to Australia with her partner and her partner's family.

Steadman will represent the 31st senate district, which includes downtown and north-central Denver. Currently a lobbyist for groups such as Equal Rights Colorado, he is also an attorney who worked on the U.S. Supreme Court case that overturned Amendment 2, the 1992 ballot measure that prohibited entities and businesses in the state from enacting antidiscrimination laws based on sexual orientation. He was profiled by Advocate.com in October for his work to help the Democrats win Colorado in the 2008 election.

Two out of the three finalists in the special election to replace Veiga were openly Gay, reports The Colorado Independent .

Amsterdam No Longer Gay Capital Of The Netherlands

AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands (Observer Update) - Amsterdam has lost its position as Gay capital of the Netherlands, according to the results of a vote by visitors to GaySite.nl.

The city only scored with the 27,500 voters in one category when cafe Prik came third in the best Gay cafe list. Cafe Prik was pipped to the post by Den Enghel in Almere and club Entrance in Apeldoorn.

Even the Gay Pride parade on the Amsterdam canals only scored 19.5% of the votes. The best Gay event went to the Pannfeest in Utrecht with 30.3%.

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

TUCSON KNIGHT OWLS (T.K.O)
We are a non profit social club that is open to every one. T.K.O. contributes to the fellowship and support of the community, and openly invites new members and/or guests. Monthly meetings occur on the first Saturday of every month at 11:00a.m., Please come and join us! Our next meeting will be held at the Yard Dog.

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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.saaf.org. VOLUNTEERS WELCOME.

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

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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.

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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 Lesbian and Gay Square Dance Club, dances Tuesdays. from 6:30-9 p.m. at Cornerstone Fellowship Social Hall, 2902 N. Geronimo (Northwest of 1st Ave. and Glenn). No experience, no partner required! For more info contact David at 325-6739, or visit www.azgaydance.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TUCSON PRIDE, INC. (Formerly Tucson Lesbian and Gay Alliance - TLGA) meets on the second Wednesday at 845 S. Craycroft Road at 6pm. Tucson Pride events: Pride Week, Gay West and OUToberFEST. For more information call 622-3200 or visit the TPI website at www.tucsonpride.com

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

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

SMART (Self Management And Recovery Training) a free non-12-step self-help alternative for people working to overcome addictive and other emotional problems meets in Tucson Monday thru Thursdays at different locations. For more information about SMART, contact Jennifer at 838-3975.

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

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP FOR ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES. Not a dating club. Discreet. Meetings every Monday evening. Call for more info. APEX (Arizona Power Exchange) 602-415-1123. 24-hr multi-choice message including information, calendar and location.

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

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. Craycroft Rd. For information visit www.lctucson.org or write: Lutherans Concerned/Tucson, P.O. Box 40702, Tucson, AZ 85717-0702.

REVEILLE MEN'S CHORUS rehearses Thursday evenings 7-10pm at the Historic Y, corner of University Blvd. And 5th Ave. Join us!! For info call 304-1758

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

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

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

MEN'S KINK DISCUSSION GROUP (Open to all who identify as male and are 18 or older) meets 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at Desert Dominion, 3843 E. 37th Street, Tucson, AZ. (Map available at www.desertdominion,org) For those who are kinky or just curious. No fee, contributions are appreciated, but not required.

NA MEETING WITH GLBT FOCUS meets Mondays, 6:30pm at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street. This is an open meeting of Narcotics Anonymous - all are welcome. For more info call Bernie W.: (520) 406-0740.

TUCSON LATINO M2M -
http://groups.yahoo. com/group/ TucsonLatinoM2M

COPPER RAINBOW BISTRO at David's Oasis Camping Resort, Bisbee, AZ 520-979-6650
www.azgaycamping.com
Membership Beer and Wine Bar. Annual Member $15.00
Bar Hours:
*Open Fridays, 5-10 p.m. or until last member leaves. Happy Hour 5-7 all drinks $100 off.
*Open Saturdays 5-10 p.m or until the last member leaves. Happy Hour 5-7 all drinks $1.00 off.
*Open Sundays 2-7 p.m. or until last member leaves. Bottle Beer starts at $1.00

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - 'L' Word showing 7pm & 9:30pm (Progressive drink specials) - First: $3 Well; Second: $1.50 pints. Last Special is 2-4-1. Following L Word, Out Loud Open Mic. If you have talent join our open night mic - Starts10:45 pm.

COLORS - Open 10am - 10pm Champagne Brunch 10am - 2pm with choice of complimentary mimosa, Bloody Mary or Screwdriver included. Happy Hour 4-7pm $3.50 Skyy Cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and well. Appetizers ½ price 4-6. Brunch served until 2pm. Full menu served until 10;m. Nightly dinner specials.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 11am. Beer Bust Sunday - $1 draft beers (12 oz), domestic only; $2.25 domestic long necks. Texas Hold-Em Poker at 3 & 6. No cash involved - Play for Points & Prizes.

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.

VENTURE-N - Open 10am-2am. Patio Bar open 3pm. Beer Bust $2.25/pitcher, 3-7pm. Burger BBQ, 5-7pm, $3 proceeds to Petwatch (Helping HIVAIDS clients with their Veterinary bills).

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

YARD DOG - Open 10am - 2am. Mimosas & Bloody Mary Bar (Build your own)

MONDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 3-8. EDAN...Exotic dancer appreciation night. DJ spins Hip Hop & R&B and all request dance. $5.25 drink specials.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7. $3.50 Skyy Cocktails, $2.75 well & domestics. Appetizers ½ price 4-6m. Full menu served until 10pm.

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). Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6 & 8:30 p.m. No cash involved - Play for points & Prizes

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".

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. SKYY Matinis $3 ea., 4-8pm.

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.

YARD DOG - Open 11am. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

TUESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 3-8. PHAT Tuesday's 50 cent Pabst cans 9pm-close Come play our Wii gaming system. Beer Pong Tournament w/cash prizes starts 9pm.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7 $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and well and ½ price appetizers 4-6. Full menu served until 10pm.

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.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestic Beer. 8pm-close "2'sDay" - $2 Well or Domestic Beer. DJ Q 9pm-close.
and DJ Craig Carter playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. Dart Tournament, 7pm $3 entry fee/Pot Match.

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.

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour til 8pm. Wild Wednesdays College Night. 18 to party - 21 to drink. $7 Cover 18+ No Cover 21+. DJ Spins Hip Hop, R&B Top 40 remix dance.

COLORS - Open 4-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and ½ price appetizers 4-6. Full menu served until 10pm. Nightly dinner specials.

COYOTE MOON PUB -Open 3pm. Happy Hour All Day $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitchers. Karaoke with Ynot Entertainment at 9pm.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. "Diva-Licious" show w/Bunny FuFu. 11pm - -close "Reverse Happy Hour". DJ Q Inside & DJ Mike Lopez playing 80s music on the Patio.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. Beer Bust, 8pm-11pm $2.50/Pitcher.

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am;. Happy Hour 11am-8pm excl. special events). Ful Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Bar open 8pm-close. Service Industry Employee Special All Day Long - $1 off all drinks except schnapps and draft. Different Themed Underwear Party 9pm-close with $1.00 off for those who participate (excl. Schnapps and Draft). Retro 80s & 90s Dance with DJ Clint 9 til close..

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm.

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour 3-8. Y-NOT Karaoke starts @9:00pm to close. 2-4-1 starts 10;pm.

COLORS - Open 4pm-10pm. Happy Hour 4-7pm,$3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and Well and ½ price appetizers. Full menu served until 10. Nightly dinner specials.. .

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg.. Pitcher. Boyz Nite Out - boys pay only .75 for well liquors or domestic drafts 8-10pm. Bicardi Thursdays - $3.00 Bicardi Rum - all flavors.

IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. 10pm-close "Boyz Nite Out" w/ Bartenders in their underwear. DJ Hurricane spinning Top 40 & DJ Mike Lopez on the patio. $1.75 Long Island, $1.50 Tequila Shots, $3 Dkyy Cape Cods and $4 Skyy Cosmos.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am..

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..

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm..

FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm-2am. Happy Hour UNTIL 8. Hip Hop & R&B. Drink Specials all night called out by DJs. Special Performances.

COLORS - Open 4pm-midnight. Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and Well and ½ price appetizers. Finlandia martinis $5.50 open to close! Full menu served until 10. "Hot Jazz, Cool Martinis" with Susan Artemis & Craig Faltin 6:30 to 9:30. "Guys & Dolls" drag show hosted by Lucinda Holliday at 10pm. Nightly dinner specials. Drink specials during the drag show.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 Sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. $2.75 All Mexican Beers and Dos XX Amber. Dance lessons at 7pm $5 per person, Country Dancing 8:30 p.m. to close with DJ Pat.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. 9pm -close DJ Hurricane inside. 10pm-close DJ Mike Lopez with "I'm a Sexy Bitch Night" on the patio.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am Patio Bar Open 7pm-2m Cuervo Margaritas $3 ea., 4-8pm.

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl spec events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-11pm Back Pocket Patio Bar open 5pm-close. Enjoy the Live Blues/Motown/Soul sounds of Simon Crown 6-9 p.m.; Request your favorite Music Dance Night with DJ Clint 9pm-close. Monthly Birthday Party every 2nd Friday Night of the month. YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Patio Bar Opens 8pm

SATURDAY

THE BIZ - Open 5pm - 2am. Starting Feb. 13th Escandalo Saturdays w/Carnival Latino. Latin Hip Hop, Top 40s & Reggaeton music will be spun. Guest DJs. $5 Cover. oGo dancers male and female. Shot specials allnight. .

COLORS - Open 4pm-10pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm, $3.50 Skyy cocktails, $2.75 Domestics and Well, ½ price appetizers 4-6. Pianist/Vocalist Marilyn Harris 6:30-9:30. Full menu served until 10. Nightly dinner specials.

COYOTE MOON PUB - Open at 2pm. Happy Hour 2-8pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Plus check out the bartenders choice of shot specials. $5.00 cheeseburger & fries. $3.00 Cuervo and $4.75 Jager Bombs. Check our calendar for the Saturday Night Special Entertainment.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, $2 Well or Domestics. 5-8pm Karaoke on the patio $1Draft Pints. 9pm "Saturday Starrlett's" w/Bunny FuFu & Janee Starr. After the show, DJ Q spinning inside & 10pm-close, DJ Mike Lopez with the "Party on the Patio".

VENTURE-N - Open 9am-2am. Patio Bar open 7pm-2am. Beer Bust $2.25/Pitcher. 3-7pm.

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Happy Hour 10am-8pm (excl spec events); Full Menu Kitchen open11am-11pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 5pm-close. Techno and Top 40 Dance with DJ Jeff 9pm til close. Check our ad for Twice-A-Month Special Events or Themed Parties.

YARD DOG - Open 8am-2am. Patio Bar Opens 8pm.

ACT against AIDS

BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

Wednesday, May 27
WOODY'S - "Pool Party". Cool off and party in their Pool. Show off your sexiest bathing suit for Happy Hour Prices all night!

Thursday, May 28
WOODY'S - Tori Steele's "Cover Girl Revue" with Chyna Collins and special guests. 10 p.m.

Friday May 29
THE BIZ - Sexy Porn Party!!! More later.

Saturday, May 30
COYOTE MOON - TMI is here playing classic rock, blues, and original music. 9pm $5 cover

WOODY'S - "Wett Party" starring adult entertainer Wolf Hudson and Woody's Dancers. 8:30pm - 2am with live performances 10:30pm and 12:30 a.m.

VENTURE-N - Starting today and every Saturday the patio will be open for laying out, relaxing and tanning. (Lounge chairs, towels and sun screen provided).

Wednesday, June 3
WOODY'S - Celebrate National Tattoo Day. 9pm to close. Show your tatt they will provide you with a Woody's tatt and get $1 off your drink or bottle beer.

Friday, June 6
WOODY'S - 8:00 p.m. .Special going away party for Linus Lerner and also a fundraiser for Reveille Chorus.

Saturday, June 6
COYOTE MOON - Benefit Show with Vivika D'Angelo and guests. 9pm

Saturday, June 20
COYOTE MOON- Benefit Show with Amanda Nicole and guests. 9pm

Informing The Community

Bears of the Old Pueblo
www.botop.com
520-829-0117
bop@botop.com
1992-2009

May Events: ***All are welcome!***
See web site for updates and more info.

Every Wed, Bear Coffee at Raging Sage Coffee Roasters, 2458 N Campbell, 7-9 pm.

Every Fri (except 5/8), Beartinis at The Shelter, 4155 E Grant, 6:30-8:30 pm.

Fri, 5/8, Social Pot Luck Dinner & Meeting, 6:30 PM, Ward 6 Council Office, 3202 E 1st St (rear entrance) – Bring a dish to pass. Just come!

Sat, 5/16, Beer Bust at Yard Dog, 2449 N Stone, 3-7 pm. Proceeds benefit Tucson Community Food Bank. Please bring canned or packaged food for Food Bank.

Thur, 5/21, Dinner Out, My Big Fat Greek, Broadway & Kolb, 6:30-8:30 pm. ***Please RSVP by email or call 829-0117 to attend.***

Sun, 5/24, Memorial Day Swim Party, 4450 E Elmwood, 2-10 PM. Bring dish to share, meat to grill, drink, towel. See website for more info.

Thur, 5/28, Bingo at Casino el Sol, 6:30-10 pm. If interested, please email or call 829-0117; leave a message requesting further details.

Sat, 5/30, Noon, BBQ Cookout, Toumey Park, 19th St 2 blocks west of Swan. Food provided. Fiesta planning meeting after BBQ.

Our 2009 Charity is the Tucson Community Food Bank. Proceeds from special events inc. beer busts, other events & our annual Fiesta in January benefit charity.

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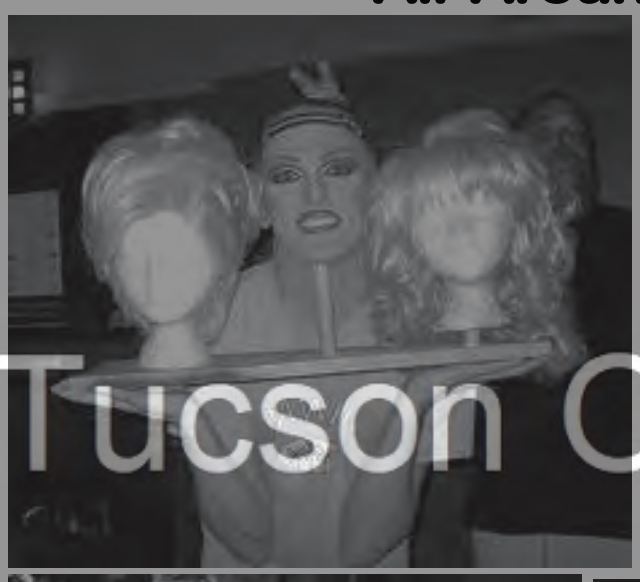
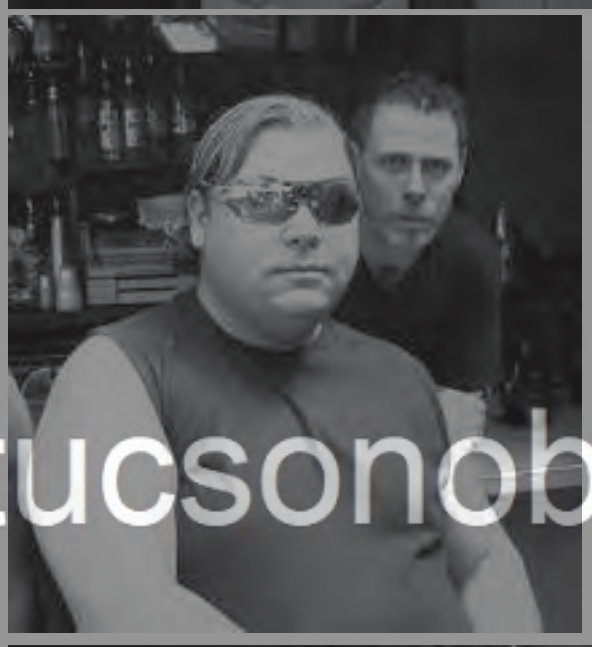
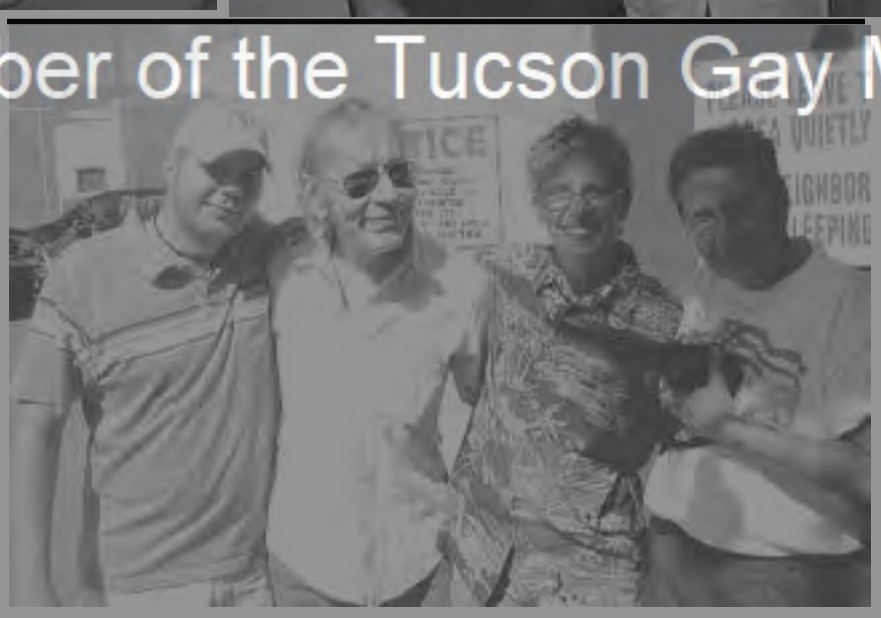
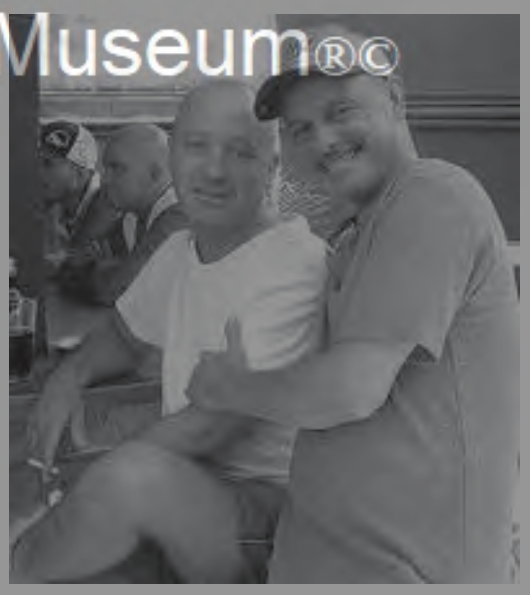
All AroundTown On Memorial Day In Tucson





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