Observing Tucson And
The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

WEEKLY OBSERVER JULY 30, 2008 ISSUE 1254

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House Panel's Vigorous Debate On DADT

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., counters a right-winger's argument that Gay troops would bring AIDS with the suggestion that the military recruit only Lesbians, reported the Associated Press on 365Gay.com.

Opponents of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy on Gays in the military denounced it as cruel and unpatriotic Wednesday (July 23). Supporters insisted it was needed to maintain military morale, and raised the prospect of a rise of HIV infection among service members if Gays are allowed to serve openly. The heated exchanges came as Congress held its first hearing on "don't ask, don't tell" since its enactment 15 years ago.

Although legislation has been introduced to overturn the ban, the hearing wasn't an attempt to advance the bill, something supporters say can only happen if Democratic Sen. Barack Obama is elected president. Republican Sen. John McCain supports "don't ask, don't tell."

Instead, "our purpose today is to begin a long-overdue review . . . and to start a conversation about the real-life impact on our service members, their families and the operational readiness of our military," said Rep. Susan Davis, D-Calif., chairwoman of the House Armed Services personnel subcommittee.

While there was plenty of conversation, consensus proved elusive and tempers flared as each side insisted on the moral soundness of their views.

The policy was intended to keep the military from asking recruits their sexual orientation, and to prevent servicemembers from declaring that they are Gay or bisexual or engaging in homosexual activity.

Among the most arresting debates Wednesday came when Rep. Patrick Murphy, D-Pa., a first-term congressman and the only Iraq war veteran in Congress, accused a witness of implying that U.S. service members weren't professional enough to handle serving with homosexuals.

"You're saying you don't trust our military professionals to serve openly with people who might be different," Murphy said angrily to Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, a nonprofit that says it promotes certain military personnel policies.

"I think that's an insult," Murphy said.

Donnelly denied that, insisting that "forced cohabitation" and resulting "sexual tension . . . will hurt discipline and morale.''

"People are human, people have sexual feelings and they're not perfect," she said. "Prejudice is wrong, but feelings about sexuality are different."

Donnelly contended that if the law were repealed the number of HIV-positive service members would probably increase.

Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., a Vietnam veteran and medical doctor, called that comment "so inappropriate" and suggested that Donnelly advocate for the military to recruit only Lesbians, who he said have a low incidence of HIV.

The top Republican on the committee, Rep. John McHugh, R-N.Y., didn't stake out a position, but said that judgment on "don't ask, don't tell" must "ultimately rest on matters of military readiness, morale, good order and discipline."

Pentagon officials weren't invited to testify after committee members concluded they wouldn't say anything other than that they'd follow the law.

Asked Wednesday whether the Pentagon thinks it's appropriate to re-examine "don't ask, don't tell," Defense Department press secretary Geoff Morrell said: "I would say only that 'don't ask, don't tell' remains the law of the land. And to my knowledge, the department is not advocating a change in policy."

Sergent Eric Alva and Elaine Donnelly

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Man Goes On Shooting Spree At Church Because Of Their Liberal Policies & Support Of LGBT

Jim Adkisson shown after his arrest for a shooting spree at a Knoxville, Tennessee church with Gay overtones.

KNOXVILLE, TN - An out-of-work truck driver accused of opening fire at a Unitarian church, killing two people, left behind a note suggesting that he targeted the congregation out of hatred for its liberal policies, including its acceptance of Gays, authorities said Monday (July 28)

A four-page letter found in Jim D. Adkisson's small SUV indicated he intentionally targeted the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church because, the police chief said, "he hated the liberal movement" and was upset with "liberals in general as well as Gays."

Adkisson, a 58-year-old truck driver on the verge of losing his food stamps, had 76 rounds with him when he entered the church and pulled a shotgun from a guitar case during a children's performance of the musical "Annie."

Adkisson's ex-wife once belonged to the church but hadn't attended in years, said Ted Jones, the congregation's president. Police investigators described Adkisson as a "stranger" to the congregation, and police spokesman Darrell DeBusk declined to comment on whether investigators think the ex-wife's link was a factor in the attack.

Adkisson remained jailed Monday on $1 million bond after being charged with one count of murder. More charges are expected. Four victims were hospitalized in critical condition. The attack Sunday morning (July 27) lasted only minutes. But the anger behind it may have been building for months, if not years. "It appears that what brought him to this horrible event was his lack of being able to obtain a job, his frustration over that, and his stated hatred for the liberal movement," Police Chief Sterling Owen said.

Adkisson was a loner who hates "blacks, Gays and anyone different from him," longtime acquaintance Carol Smallwood of Alice, Texas, told the Knoxville News Sentinel.

For G/L Couples, Divorce Is As Challenging As Marriage

CHICAGO, Illinois (Observer Update) - Across the country, same-sex couples are discovering that getting divorced can be far more complicated than getting married.

Even in Massachusetts and California, where married Gay couples have the same right to divorce as heterosexual couples, a clash between federal and state laws makes the process anything but equal. States vary in their policies on Gay and Lesbian marriages and divorces. Many states have passed statutes defining marriage as being between a man and a woman.

But it is the courts that ultimately will rule on whether that means married Gay couples should not be allowed to divorce. New York recognizes Gay and Lesbian marriages performed in other states, and Gay and Lesbian divorces are proceeding in the state. In Oklahoma, a judge unwittingly granted a divorce to two Lesbians who had married in Canada. On discovering that both members of the couple were women, the judge revoked the divorce, on grounds that they had never been legally married.

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UPDATE

2008 Election Update: Early Voting Begins; Deadline To Register For Primary, Aug. 4

By Mark R. Kerr

TUCSON (Observer Update) - On Thursday, July 31, many registered voters in Tucson, across Pima County and the state will start to receive their early, mail in ballots for the upcoming primary election, scheduled to take place Tuesday, September 2.

In this upcoming election, voters will decide who the party's stand bearers will be for political posts, ranging from the local to the federal (Congressional) levels.

Monday, August 4 is the deadline to be registered to vote for the September primary election in Arizona. To register to vote (in Pima County) either call (520) 740-4330 or go online to recorder.pima.gov and follow the links. People across Arizona, as well as Pima County can utilize Service Arizona's online voter registration which can be accessed from the Observer blog, tucsonobserver.blogspot.com.

Remember, to register to vote you must have a valid picture I.D., a requirement under state law. To register, one will need to put the pertinent information (driver's license number) on the registration form.

Desert Voices Open House August 11 and August 18

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Mid-July heat, monsoon rains - a typical Tucson summer. But a not-so-typical upcoming season for Desert Voices.

On August 11, Desert Voices begins year number 20, their Platinum Season, and what exciting plans are in the making. The chorus will be holding open houses on Monday, August 11 and 18 at 7:00 p.m., Water of Life MCC, 3269 N. Mountain Ave. Meet current chorus members and learn about the season. Desert Voices is always looking for new singers. Meet with Chris Tackett, the artistic director, have a quick voice check to determine your range, and then get ready to be a part of an exciting musical year.

For more information, call (520) 791-5662, or E-mail info@desertvoices.org.

Suzanne Westenhoefer In Tucson August 22

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Comedian Suzanne Westenhoefer will be performing on August 22, 8:00 p.m. at the Rialto Theatre, 318 E. Congress.

Suzanne vaulted onto the national comedy scene in the early 1990's as the first openly Lesbian comedian and she has been thrilling both mainstream and Gay and Lesbian audiences ever since. Her acclaimed career includes appearances on popular late night television shows as well as performances across the U.S. in popular theaters, clubs, and fundraisers. Fearless. Bold. Sparkly. Hilarious. That's Suzanne Westenhoefer in a nutshell. She's made a career out of telling the truth. And, the truth is, life is funny (and no one is off limits). From her sister's obsession with "Passion of the Christ" to her girlfriend's Herculean thighs, Suzanne tells stories that leave audiences in stitches. Suzanne works mostly unscripted, so when she hits the stage it's an unpredictable, original night of comedy magic.

For tickets or more information, either call (520) 740-1000 or go online to the Rialto Theatre's website, rialtotheatre.com.

Vote No On Prop 102 Statewide Campaign Officially Launched

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - Proposition 102, if approved by Arizona voters on November 4, will amend the Arizona Constitution by adding the following article: Only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state.

Yes, here we go again...another anti-gay amendment. This time, however, unlike Prop 107 in 2006, the opposition has done more than distill down the language. They have abused the very democracy designed to protect the minority from the majority. They have failed to protect Arizona's citizens from the tyranny of the majority. Arizona has more important issues to address

A statewide coordinated campaign has been established to fight against Prop 102. In collaboration with LGBT and allied organizations and individuals from all across Arizona, we are committed to ensuring discrimination does not get enshrined in the Arizona Constitution. With lessons learned from Arizona's long history of fighting these measures, including campaigns in 1994 and 2006, we have tapped into our collective wisdom and passion for democracy to organize a campaign worthy of your support.

You are the campaign. Please visit the campaign website at eqfed.org/ct/sdMA4p11GmHJ/ today to sign-up for volunteer opportunities, to donate and to share your stories of how you are working to defeat Prop 102. In just 98 short days voters in Arizona will have to decide whether or not we will tolerate coercion and threats used against our elected officials. We will have to decide if we will tolerate elected officials wasting taxpayers' money and not using their time wisely to take care of urgent issues affecting our state: health care, education and a growing deficit.

Please don't delay. Sign-up ateqfed.org/ct/sdMA4p11GmHJ/. Make a significant donation to the campaign and get involved today! We have only 98 days to help Arizonans understand the issues. Please do your part today - this campaign belongs to the voters of Arizona who demand an honest government, a government that does not dictate our values and a government that is fair and open in their deliberations.

Enough already! Vote no on PROP 102 (eqfed.org/ct/sdMA4p11GmHJ/), votenoprop102.com.

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Office Hours: 9a.m.-6p.m.
Monday thru Friday

Office Closed Thursdays

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Informing the Community
The Observer

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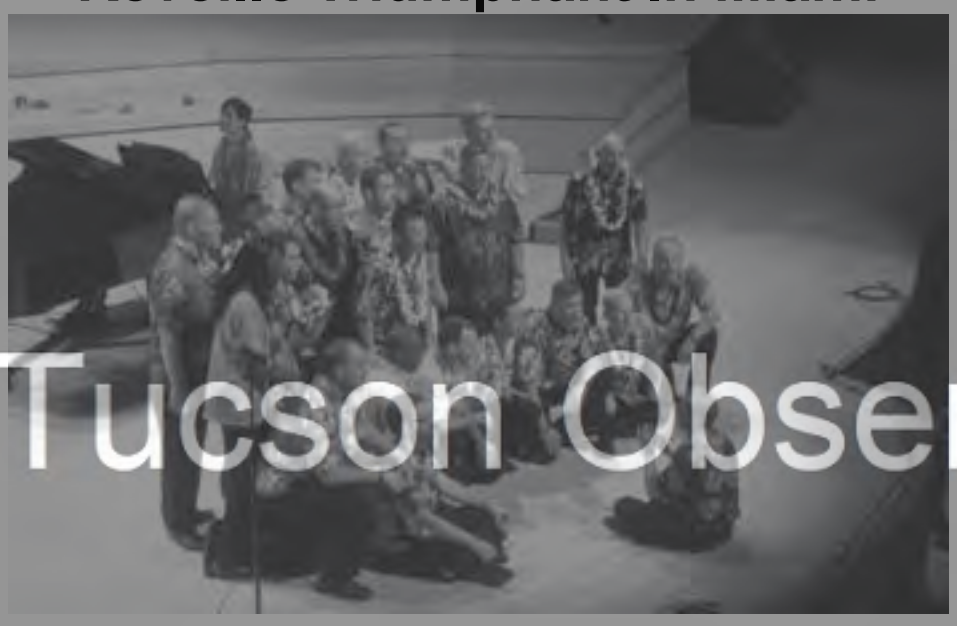
Reveille Triumphant In Miami



TUCSON (Observer Update) - Reveille Men's Chorus returned recently from a week in Miami Florida where they proudly represented Tucson at the GALA Festival VIII. The men from Reveille were part of over 5,000 GLBT men and women from around the country who came together for a week of choral music, solidarity and fellowship.

"Just imagine being in a concert hall with 2,500 Gays and Lesbians listening to Gay and Lesbian choirs sing, the experience is hard to put into words," remarked Jeffrey Bracker, Chorus President. "When the music is good you're moved to tears because everyone remembers a time when they were all alone and you felt you were the only Gay person on the planet." This year GALA (Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses) celebrated their 25th year in existence. It was actually 30 years ago when the Gay choral movement began when Gay men and women in New York and San Francisco came together to sing and realized what a powerful tool they had for change. Today there are over 150 GLBT choruses across the country and in England, Ireland, France and Germany. The motto of GALA is "changing hearts thru music" and most major cities have a Gay, Lesbian or mixed chorus reaching out to their community just as Reveille and Desert Voices does here in Tucson.

For 7 days choruses sang in two, hour performance blocks simultaneously in two theaters in downtown Miami. Each chorus was given 30 minutes to present their program. Reveille's time slot was 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday just before the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus (one of the larger choruses in attendance). "My guys should be very proud of what they accomplished in Miami," enthused a very animated conductor, Linus Lerner. "We had already seen some of the very best that GALA has to offer, those large city choruses are big, most with over 100 singers and we were only 21. But I'm happy to say we were the little chorus that could! Members of New York, San Francisco, Golden Gate,Turtle Creek (Dallas) told me that they were very impressed with our sound and those are some of the best choruses out there. Conductors from Boston Gay Men's Chorus, Heartland Men's Chorus, Cincinnati Men's Chorus also came to talk to me about our sound and performance. We worked very hard before and it showed."

"This was my first GALA experience and I was blown away by the love and support everyone gives each chorus," said Shawn Cullen, assistant conductor for Reveille and the band director at Magee Middle School. "These are our peers who are listening to us sing, they know what good singing is all about, they know the hard work that goes into putting a show together so when they give you a standing ovation it really means something. And we got three standing ovations during our performance."

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Around The Old Pueblo

"Turnabout for TIHAN" is an annual show put on by Tucson's LGBT clubs and their bar staff. The staff request donations from their friends and customers in order to do a "turn-about" from male to female (or vice versa) and put on a show to benefit the work and programs of TIHAN, the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (tihan.org). This year's show will take place on Sunday, August 24 at the Doubletree Hotel at 445 South Alvernon Way. The doors open at 4:30 p.m., and the show starts at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are only $15.00. Admission includes the show and finger food hors d'oeuvres at 4:30 p.m. The evening also features a raffle with some great prizes. For more information on how you can participate in the fun, contact Scott Blades at (520) 299-6647. Tickets are on sale now through the TIHAN office (credit card orders can be taken), or at participating bars.

Enjoy a trip up, August 17, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., to the cool temperatures of Mt. Lemmon. Meet at the NE corner of Tanque Verde and Catalina Hwy at the McDonalds at 11:00 a.m. to caravan/car pool up the mountian. There is a $5 per vehicle park pass required. If you want to meet later in the afternoon, take the Catalina Highway off Tanque Verde Road in Tucson. Drive 4.2 miles to the Forest boundary and continue 25.6 miles (through Summerhaven). Marshall Gulch Picnic Area is a quarter mile beyond the village. Look for the rainbow flag at our picnic area. For more information, contact Peter Lake, (520) 245-6659.

On Saturday, August 2, Wingspan will be holding their next in their Community Conversation series, Home Matters: Immigration and LGBT Life. This conversation will take place from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th Street. For more information, call (520) 624-1779.

Tucson's Chapter of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will be holding their monthly meeting, Wednesday, August 6, 7:00 p.m. at the Ward VI City Council office, 3202 E. 1st St. PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender persons, their families and friends through: Support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. PFLAG provides opportunity to dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identify, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity. For more information, call (520) 360-3795 or go online to pflagtucson.org.

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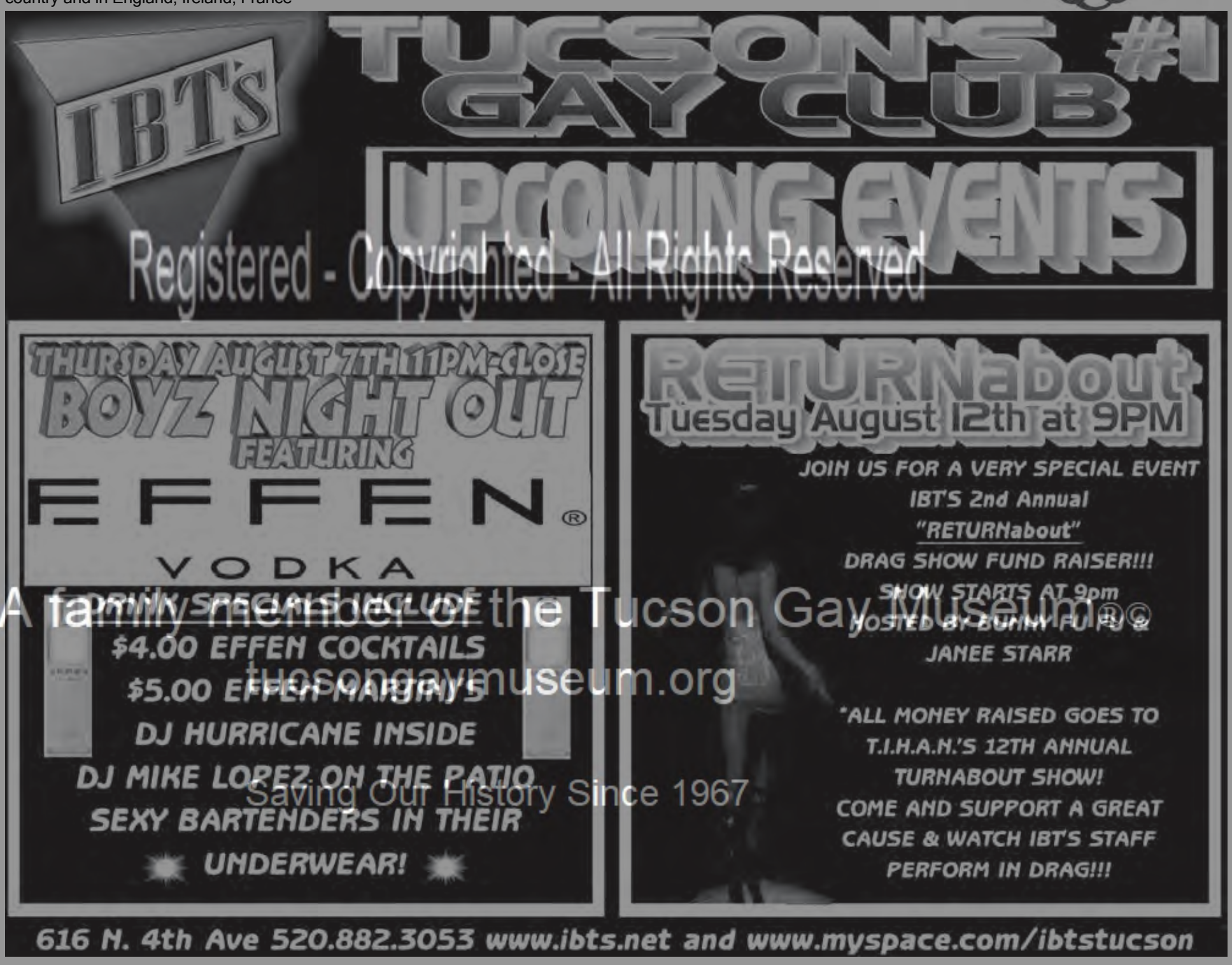

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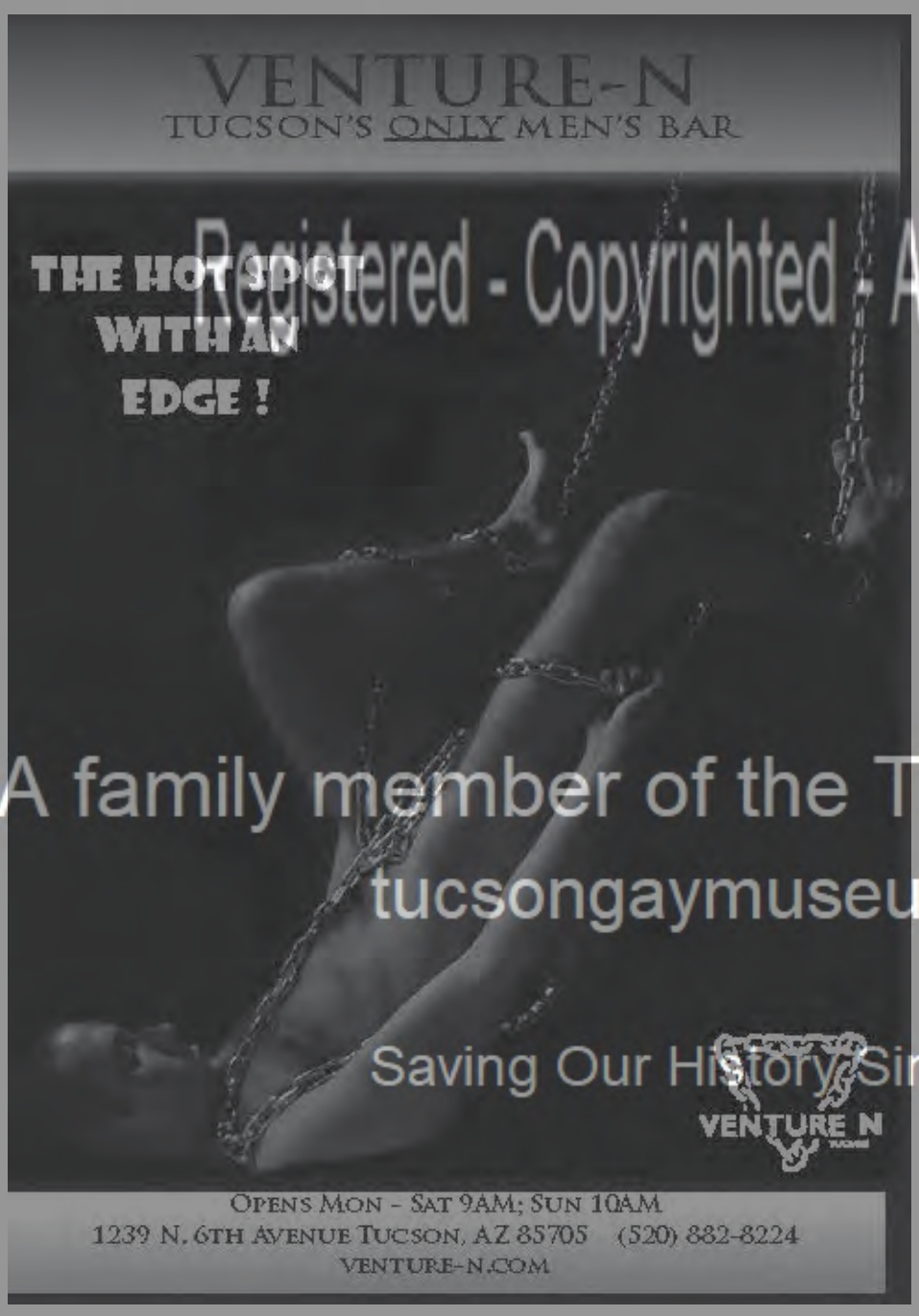

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Judge Accuses Principal Of 'Gay Witch Hunt'

PONCE DE LEON, Florida (Observer Update) - A federal judge has accused a Florida high school principal of going on a witch hunt for Gays, reported advocate.com. In a stinging rebuke, US District Judge Richard Smoak, said in a written ruling that Ponce de Leon High School principal David Davis led a "relentless crusade" against homosexuality at the school.

"Davis embarked on what can only be characterized as a witch hunt," Smoak's ruling said. The ruling also said that Davis led "morality assemblies" that ignored the First Amendment. The written ruling was released two months after student Heather Gillman and the American Civil Liberties Union won a free-speech lawsuit that cost the school district $325,000. Davis has since been replaced as principal. During the two-day trial in May, Davis testified that he believed clothing, buttons or stickers featuring rainbows would make students automatically picture Gay people having sex. He went on to admit that while censoring rainbows and Gay pride messages, he allowed students to wear other symbols many find controversial, such as the Confederate flag.

Gillman, a 16-year-old junior at Ponce de Leon High School, sued the school with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union after she was told she could not wear buttons, stickers or clothing that supported LGBT civil rights. The ACLU last November sent a letter to the school board's attorney on behalf of Gillman, asking for clarification as to whether a variety of symbols and slogans, such as the rainbow flag or "I support my Gay friends," would be allowed at the school. The school district replied that it would not allow any expressions of support for Gay rights at all because such speech would "likely be disruptive." The district then said that such symbols and slogans were signs that students were part of a "secret/ illegal organization."

Tensions began in September 2007, when a Lesbian student tried to report to school officials that she was being harassed by other students because she is a Lesbian. Instead of addressing the harassment, students say the school responded with intimidation, censorship and suspensions. Prior to the release of his written ruling, Smoak issued an order that forced the school to stop its censorship of students who want to express their support for Gay people. The judge also warned the district not to retaliate against students over the lawsuit.

Killer Of Lawrence King Is To Be Tried As An Adult

OXNARD, California (Observer Update) - A lawyer for an Oxnard middle school student charged with killing Gay classmate Lawrence King said Friday (July 25) that he wants to get the case in front of a jury quickly now that a Ventura County judge has turned down his request to move it to juvenile court.

Deputy public defender Willie Quest said he was disappointed by Superior Court Judge Douglas Daily's finding that there was no constitutional violation in Dist. Atty. Gregory Totten's decision to try Brandon McInerney, 14, as an adult.

"We hope a jury will look at it in a much more reasonable light," Quest said. "I'm not going to allow a 14-year-old to go to prison for the rest of his life without someone other than the D.A.'s office looking at this."

Brandon McInerney

The 'Best And Worst' Automotive Insurers Of 2008

By Dan Kalm

Do you ever wonder how your auto insurance company stacks up against the competition when it comes to handling claims? The level of service insurers provide does not always correlate to the premium you pay.

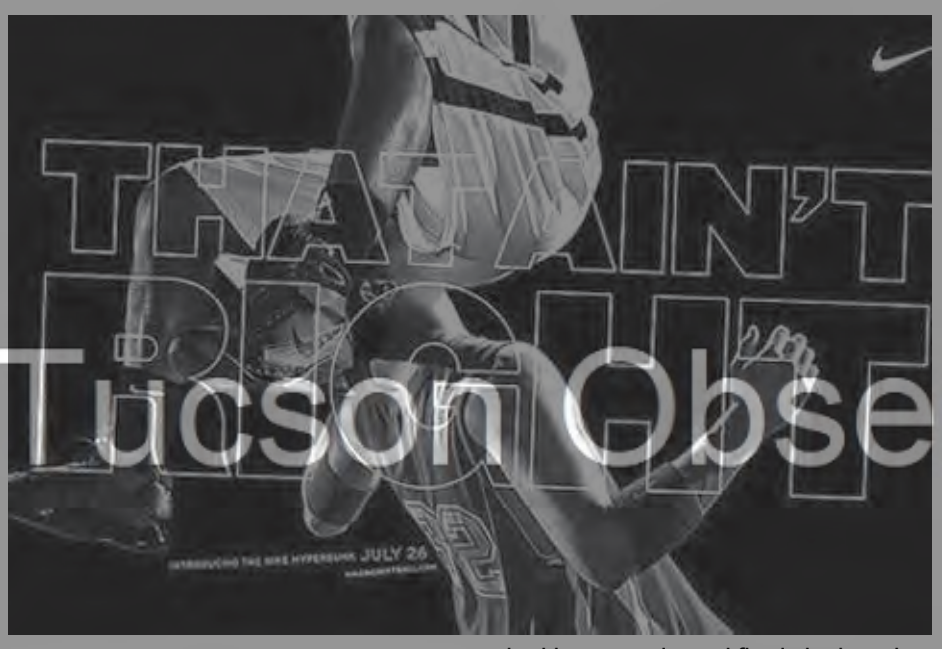
While some insurers focus on providing quality repairs and service, others focus on reducing their cost to the point of providing inferior repairs and services to their policy holders. To help consumers make more educated purchasing decisions, the Automotive Service Association (ASA) of Arizona released the results of its 11th annual "Best Insurer" survey. Arizona collision repair facilities were asked to rate insurance companies on a scale of one (worst) to ten (best) based on the question; "Do the insurance company's overall policies, attitudes and payment processes focus on providing quality and timely repairs for the consumer?" The association has listed below the rank and score of 40 insurance companies that insure the majority of vehicles in Arizona. "The most important aspect of the survey is that it underscores the significant variance in how insurers treat their policyholders after a covered loss," said Luz Rubio, Executive Director of ASA of Arizona.

The top ten insurance companies were: USAA, State Farm, CHUBB, Farm Bureau, AAA, GMAC, Hartford, American Family, CA Casualty, Fireman's.

The Automotive Service Association of Arizona is a not-for-profit association that includes both collision and mechanical repair facilities in Arizona. Visit ASA at asaaz.org.

(To find out more, E-mail Dan at dan@dankalm.com or call (520) 795-0231. Dan and his staff will be answering various questions about insurance in future editions of the Observer.)

Nike To Pull Ad



NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - Nike said Friday (July 25) it would pull its ads for its Hyperdunk basketball shoes, responding to criticism that they fed homophobic views.

Nike previously defended the ads, but said it would withdraw them as quickly as possible "to underline our ongoing commitment to supporting diversity in sport and the workplace," The Oregonian reported. The ads were created by Portland's Wieden+Kennedy agency and titled "That Ain't Right," "Isn't That Cute," and "Punks Jump Up." One ad showed a basketball player dunking over another. The crotch of the player dunking was planted firmly in the other player's face. The ad sported a large tag line: "That Ain't Right."

Earlier, Nike had said the ads were "based purely upon a common insight from within the game of basketball - the athletic feat of dunking on the opposition, and is not intended to be offensive." Nike also reiterated its "history of supporting athletes regardless of their sexual orientation." Nike has been praised by Gay-rights advocates for supporting a 2007 Oregon law banning discrimination against Gays in work, housing and public places.

Snickers Ad Pulled Under Pressure From HRC

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - Mars Inc. has pulled its newest television commercial for Snickers candy bars after communication with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). "Following conversations between the Human Rights Campaign and senior Mars representatives, the company has agreed to pull its most recent ad using stereotypes of Gay men to sell its Snickers product line," HRC workplace director Daryl Herrschaft said in a press release.

The ad depicts a man speed-walking in an effeminate manner reminiscent of Gay male stereotypes. The walker is then ridiculed by Mr. T as the former wrestler shoots Snickers bars from a gun, telling him to "be a man."

"These kinds of acts perpetuate the notion that the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender community is a group of second-class citizens and that violence against GLBT people is not only acceptable but humorous," Herrschaft said. In 2007, another offensive Snickers commercial was aired during Super Bowl XLI. "Following that, HRC began a constructive dialogue with Mars on workplace inclusion for GLBT employees," Herrschaft said. "We were of course surprised to see the company return to the same practice it had just recently rejected."

However, "HRC applauds Mars for taking swift and appropriate action" in the removal of both commercials. "We are hopeful that Mars will make the necessary changes in their organization to ensure this does not happen yet again," Herrschaft said, advocate.com reported.

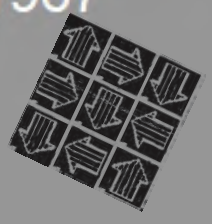
Calif. Ban's Wording Change May Help It Fail

SACRAMENTO, California (Observer Update) – The California Secretary of State has changed language in the voter ballot initiative that would ban same-sex marriage in California, reported advocate.com.

Proposition 8 would overturn the state Supreme Court ruling that Gay couples in California are allowed to marry. The original wording of the Nov. 4 ballot initiative read, "[Proposition 8] amends the California Constitution to provide that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." The new language says the initiative "Changes California Constitution to eliminate right of same-sex couples to marry." It further explains that banning same-sex marriage could prevent the state from gaining tens of millions of dollars in potential sales tax revenue.

A Field Poll from July 18 shows that 51 percent of Californians are against the ban, 42 percent favor it and 7 percent are undecided. Additionally, 63 percent of Democrats said they would vote against the ban while 68 percent of Republicans said they would vote for it. The poll was the second consecutive study to show that a majority of Californians – a very slim majority – would vote for marriage equality.

Supporters of Proposition 8 said they would file suit to block the change made by California Atty. Gen. Jerry Brown to the language of the measure's ballot title and summary.



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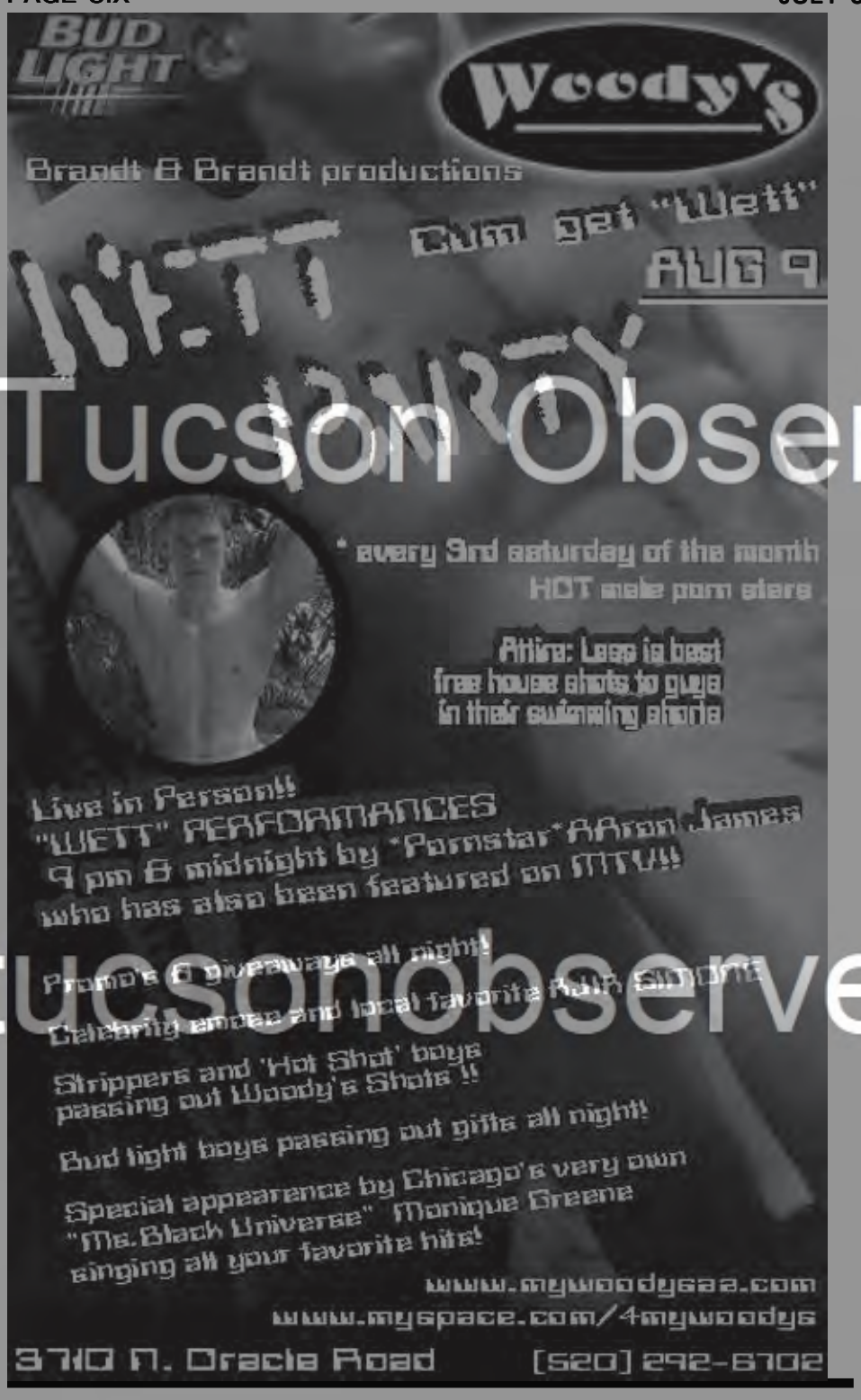
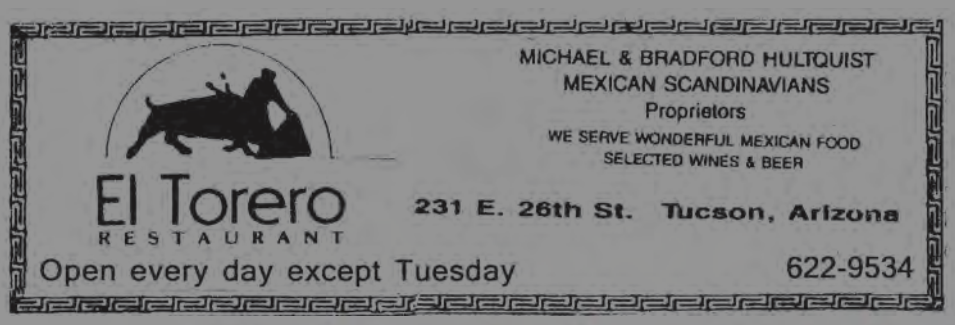




Fueled By Petrol

by Jimmy Petrol

Stress Kills Is Truer For Pos Folk Than Ever

CD4-T cell loss in aids positive people has been found to be halted or slowed by mindfulness meditation, which is a form of meditation that is not generally understood in the West. Meditation is most often thought of as a "blanking" of the mind, which is not at all what Mindfulness Meditation is about.

To become mindful is to become aware of the now, to cease to dwell on the past and to forget to chew on what may be coming. Mindfulness is about being present in the moment, to feel and be what and where we are in time and space.

It is the practice of being not only where you are in space, but also where you are in time. This is not something that Westerners do well; it is hard to be present in the moment when you are trying to keep an eye on the "bottom line".

A quick net search turns up Buddhist sites, classes and all sorts of marketing for this meditation technique, which is becoming popularized as such an effective stress reducing agent that it is used to aid weight loss, ease depression and prevent the decline of CD4-T cells in aids infected persons.

The research, from the University of California, was so irrefutable that the good Doctors are busy searching for the mechanisms that go into play when stress is significantly reduced by the use of Mindfulness Meditation training.

While the tag line "meditation" may be new to the technique, the idea of living in the moment is at the heart of several religions and the most successful alcohol diversion program in the world, Alcoholics Anonymous.

The fact that a person that is adept at aligning him/herself with the actual time of living experience becomes healthier and has better immunity to sickness is no news; what is new is that Westerners can now get out for a trendy (yet effective) class and loose weight, get happy and preserve those T cell levels.

This alignment of the three "normal" dimensions with the fourth dimension, this novel idea of being where one is in Time as well as space, has effects that transcend our understanding. It is very much apparent that there is a physical manifestation of our mental time component; those that are living in the past or future are physically harmed from the excursions they take into time.

It is something to wonder about, time. All of the other dimensions have physical characteristics; space is tactile, three dimensional objects are hard.

Time, on the other hand, has always been a dimension that is mental in nature. Our perception of time is that it is observable in a sequential and intellectual way, but is not really a physical dimension like the other three.

Except for the rather esoteric experiments with synchronized watches and spacecraft, which show a real time dilation for travelers at super-high speeds, there has been no physical side to time.

Now there is.

If we align ourselves with the time we are alive in, rather than time that we think does not really exist (past and future times), we are healthier as an organism.

Time travel, after all, turns out to be damaging to your health. For this to be true might mean that when we think about other times we really go there in some physical way, which in turn means that the past and the future must actually exist in a physical sense. Otherwise, why the measurable physical damage to the organism?

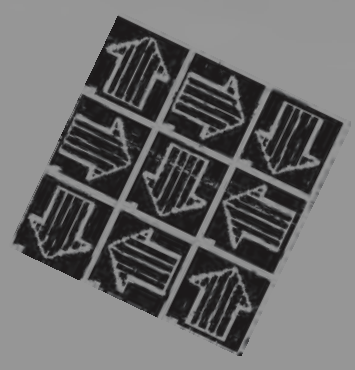
Just think about that next time you are laying around astral projecting. If it is dangerous to be out of sync with time, how good can it be to be somewhere you aren't?

Pennsylvania Court Strips Down Hate-Crimes Law

HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania (Observer Update) - The Pennsylvania supreme court on Wednesday (July 23) struck down changes to the state's hate_crimes law that added sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, gender, and mental and physical disability to the list of protected characteristics, the Pittsburgh Tribune_Review reports on advocate.com.

The state legislature amended the Ethnic Intimidation and Institutional Vandalism Act in 2002, and the measure was signed into law by Republican governor Mark Schweiker. Christian group Repent America filed a lawsuit challenging the expansion of the law in 2005. The commonwealth court, a lower court, ruled in November 2007 that the amendments were unconstitutional.

According to Equality Advocates Pennsylvania, the supreme court stripped out the additional protections because of the way the measure was passed __ as an alteration of an agricultural bill __ not because of its content. The organization assisted in writing the legislation and worked on getting it through the house and senate. "We are extremely disappointed that some of the most vulnerable people in Pennsylvania are now unprotected by our state's hate crimes law," said Equality Advocates executive director Stacey Sobel in a press release. "I urge the legislature to once again pass this legislation with all deliberate speed." Sobel added that Equality Advocates will work to reinstate the expanded law.



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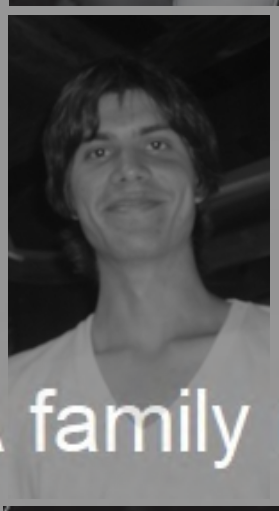

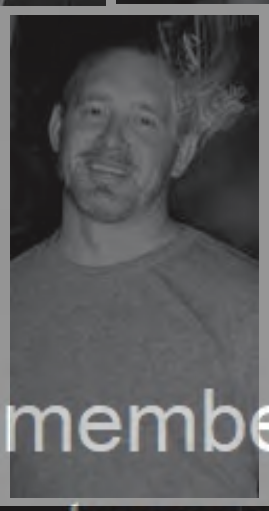

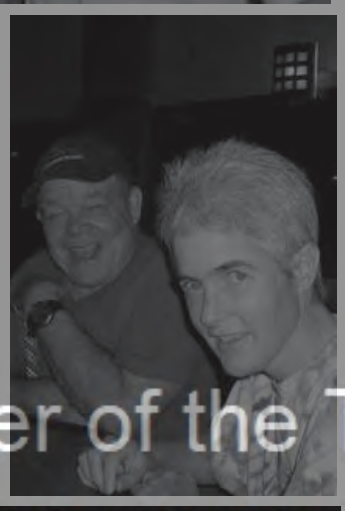

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MTV has announced that it will remake the 1975 classic Rocky Horror Picture Show, Variety reported Wednesday (July 23). Although MTV will be using Jim Sharman's original screenplay, new songs may be added to the two-hour film. Lou Adler, the executive producer of the original film, is partnering with Fox Television Studios to produce the remake, Variety reported. "I'd like to see it shown a year from this coming Halloween, but that's up to MTV," Adler told Variety, advocate.com reported.

Given the current state of the television landscape, questions of diversity are likely to come up with some frequency in the coming days. FOX Entertainment President Kevin Reilly just had the good fortune to face them first. Somewhat less fortunate was Reilly's place in front of the press on the morning that the GLAAD Network Responsibility Index report came out, giving FOX a failing grade in issues of on-air Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender representation. "I can say that we've got several shows now moving forward with Gay characters in them," Reilly says, regarding the GLAAD report and previous statements he'd made regarding the network's diversity in these matters. "Sometimes you've actually got great representation, and then for creative reasons or commercial reasons, something gets canceled and your numbers go down."

Showtime is working on a spinoff to its Lesbian drama "The L Word," which will kick off its sixth and final season early next year. Ilene Chaiken, the creator of the edgy series, is in the early stages of developing the spinoff, which will star one of the "L Word" actresses, said Robert Greenblatt, Showtime's president of entertainment. The identity of the chosen actress has not yet been revealed to the cast, Greenblatt said during the Television Critics Assn. press tour at the Beverly Hilton on Friday. Pressed for more details, he said only: "We're still forming it. I'm sure I have a million e-mails already from loyal viewers about it, but we're still in the process of figuring it out."

Family Of Dancer Shot At San Diego Pride To Sue Police

Steven Hirschfield

SAN DIEGO, California (Observer Update) - The family of Steven Hirschfield, the dancer on a San Diego Gay pride party boat who was shot and killed by police who claim he resisted rescue attempts and seized an officer's weapon, says they don't believe the officers' accounts and plan to sue, reported towleroad.com.

The family's lawyer calls the police version of events a "complete fabrication": "The officer who shot him had a Taser – why didn't he use it? And if he was in a brawl, why isn't there more evidence of that? There was very little scratching or bruising on his body." KNBC: "Results of an autopsy released Monday showed he died from a gunshot wound to the chest. Claypool said medical examiners confirmed Hirschfield was shot in the back and his family believes officers acted with "excessive force" and disputes accounts given by police. 'It is our belief based on a witness account and information learned through the autopsy performed by the San Diego County coroner that Mr. Hirschfield was not the aggressor and was not involved in a brawl with police officers prior to being executed by this police officer,' [their] attorney [Brian Claypool] said."

According to a witness, there was a former Marine in the water attempting to rescue Hirschfield who has not yet been contacted by the family's attorney. "Claypool said his suit would seek punitive damages from the Harbor Police Department. He told KNSD-TV he was first contacted about the case by a civil rights watchdog group that monitors alleged police brutality matters. I think this is a Gay-rights issue,' Claypool said."

Arkansas Group Gets Extension For Anti-Adoption Signatures

LITTLE ROCK, Arkanasas (Observer Update) - A proposed measure prohibiting unmarried but cohabitating (including Gay and Lesbian) couples from adopting or fostering children in Arkansas has fallen short of the 61,794 signatures necessary to get it placed on the November ballot, according to a press release from the Arkansas News Bureau.

The Family Council Action Committee has been spearheading the initiative and has been granted an extension of 30 days to gather additional signatures. It still needs about 4,000 valid signatures to get the initiative on the ballot. The group originally submitted the required number of signatures, but only 57,888 were certified as valid. FCAC executive director Jerry Cox plans to obtain the missing signatures, and 10,000 more, in part by canvassing large churches to gain support, advocate.com reported.

According to the group, gathering signatures for this measure is more difficult than the signature-gathering effort four years ago to amend Arkansas's constitution to ban Gay marriage, which passed easily, because the adoption issue is more complicated and difficult to explain. In working on this campaign, the FCAC is working to "blunt a homosexual agenda," Cox said.

POLITICS 2008

by Mark R. Kerr

Propositioin 102 Update

A total of eleven measures, referendum, initiatives, and constitutional amendments will be on Arizona's November general election ballot.

Only one of the eleven was placed on the ballot, not by petition or state commission, but by the radical right-wing Republicans who control the Arizona Legislature. Proposition 102, if approved by Arizona voters, will amend the Arizona Constitution by adding the following article related to marriage: "Marriage - Only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state."

State law, Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) 25-101 and ARS 25-112, enacted in 1996 already covers the subject. Plus, in 2003 and 2004, the law was upheld in Arizona Superior Court and the Arizona Supreme Court in the case Standhardt V. Superior Court.

Opponents of Proposition 102 have launched a website, votenoprop102.com/, bookmark the site, sign up to volunteer and donate your time and money. To send a donation via snail mail, make check payable to the "No on SCR 1042 committee," PO Box 25044, Phoenix, Arizona 85002.

The first meeting in regard to defeating Proposition 102 took place July 26 at the Main Library, 101 N. Stone (Main Meeting Room Lower Level). Many members of the community were in attendance and many ideas to defeat the proposition were presented. Jason Cianciotto, Executive Director of Wingspan and the Treasurer of the formed opposition said it was a positive, good meeting.

On Saturday, August 23, 2:30 p.m. at the Main Library (Main Meeting Room Lower Level). 101 North Stone, the next community meeting on Proposition 102 will take place. ...

Openly Gay state Senator Ken Cheuvront, D-Phoenix, Monday, July 21, filed an ethics complaint against state Senator Jack Harper, R-Surprise, of disregarding Senate rules by conspiring to cut off debate to help speed a vote on a proposed constitutional amendment against same-sex marriage. According to reports and news accounts, Cheuvront's complaint was filed Monday, July 21, calling for a reprimand of Sen. Jack Harper, R-Surprise, for violating a rule on conduct of debate.

On Monday, July 28, the Senate Ethics Committee voted three to two, starting an investigation of state Senator Jack Harper over his actions during the last day of the legislative session, June 27, in which SCR (Senate Concurrent Resolution) 1042 was forced through to be placed on the November general election ballot as Proposition 102.

Republican Jay Tibshraney along with Democratic Senator's Marsha Arzberger and Richard Miranda voted for the investigation. Republican Senator's Barbara Leff and Robert Blendu voted against.

Goodling Rejected 'Outstanding' Attorney's Job Extension Because Of 'Inappropriate' Gay Relationship

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - In April, NPR reported that the Justice Department Inspector General was investigating whether former DOJ White House liaison Monica Goodling dismissed a career DOJ attorney "because of rumors that she is a Lesbian," reported thinkprogress.com.

On Monday (July 28) the Office of Professional Responsibility report confirms that Goodling, a graduate of Pat Robertson's Regent University, did discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. In the case described by the report, Goodling stalled an assistant U.S. attorney's advancement because of rumors of a Gay relationship with her superior, a U.S. attorney.

As the report notes, the assistant U.S. attorney (AUSA) received "outstanding" performance reviews, the highest possible rating, and was subsequently granted a work extension in 2006. Goodling, however, opposed it. Deputy Director John Nowacki, who supported the extension, described a meeting with Goodling: Goodling brought up the issue of the attorney's "relationship in progress" with her U.S. Attorney "and made it clear just that she thought that was inappropriate."

Several other officials report witnessing the same discrimination from Goodling. When Executive Office for U.S. Attorney Associate Counsel Natalie Voris told Goodling she supported the extension, Goodling "responded that Voris did not know the AUSA as well as she thought she did." Voris said that Goodling then told her that the [assistant U.S. attorney] had a homosexual relationship with the U.S. Attorney in the AUSA's USAO and that the two took trips together at government expense. Voris told us she believes that the AUSA's

Monica Goodling

alleged sexual orientation was a factor in Goodling's decision not to extend the detail.

Furthermore, when the assistant U.S. attorney sought a detail in the Office of Violence Against Women, Goodling objected "because it would look like the Department was sanctioning the homosexual relationship." The OIG report also implicates Michael Battle, a key figure in the US. Attorney scandal, for sitting on the sidelines. Battle "should have raised concerns about Goodling's actions with Goodling's supervisor, Kyle Sampson, the OIG [Office of Inspector General], or OPR," the report states.

"We concluded that Goodling's actions violated Department policy and federal law, and constituted misconduct," the report adds. Both the assistant U.S. attorney and the U.S. attorney denied the relationship.

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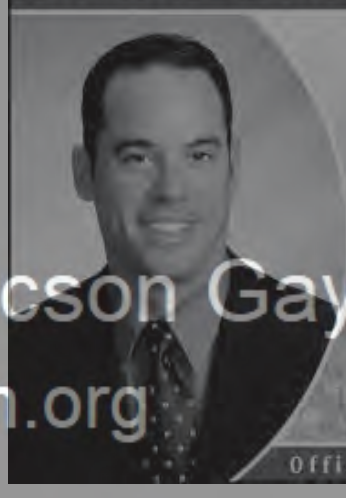

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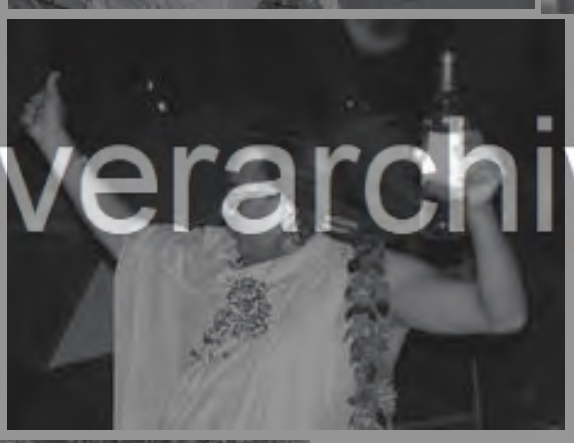
Tucson Knight Owls (TKO) On A Weekend Run To Rose Canyon Lake



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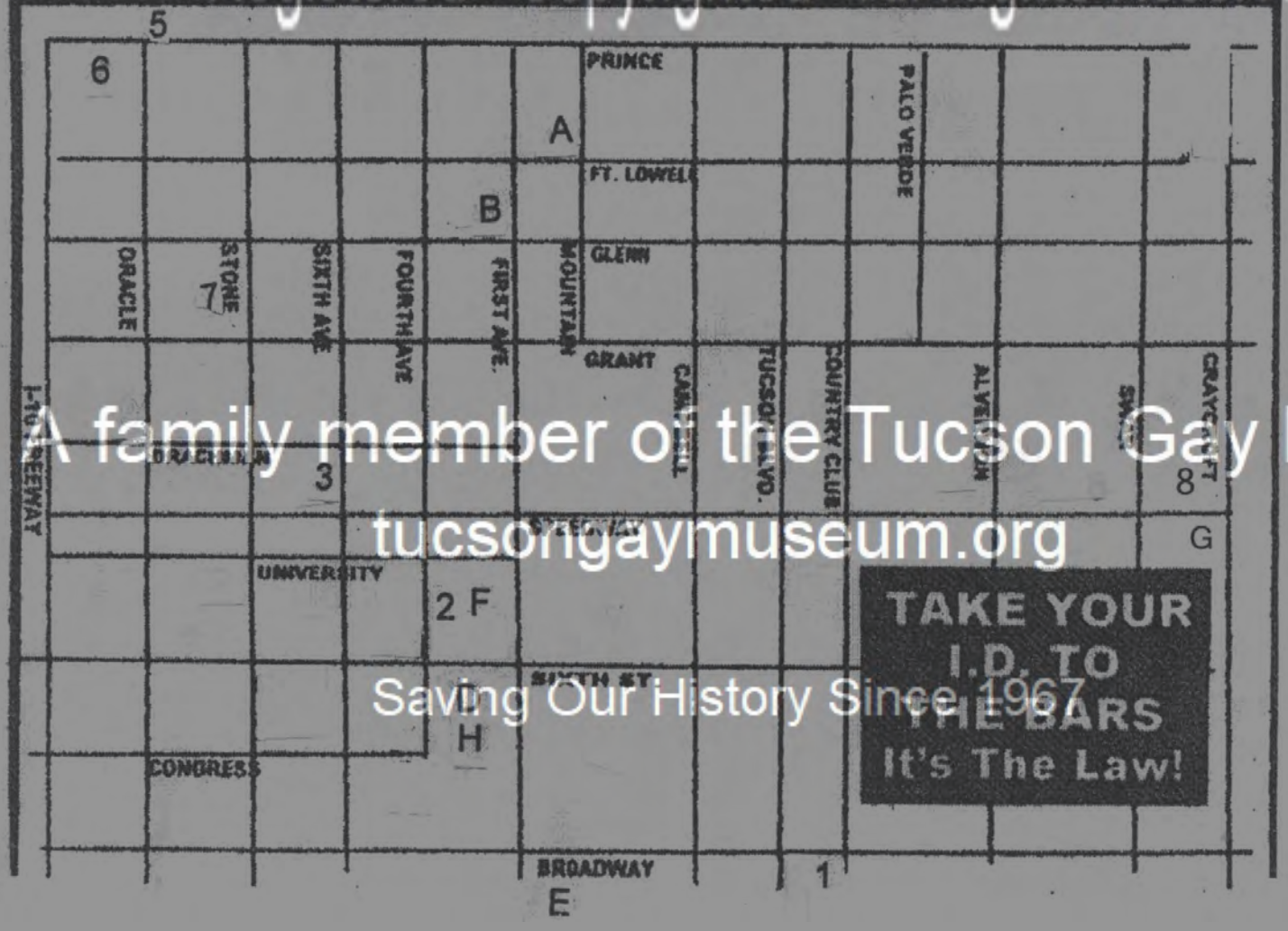

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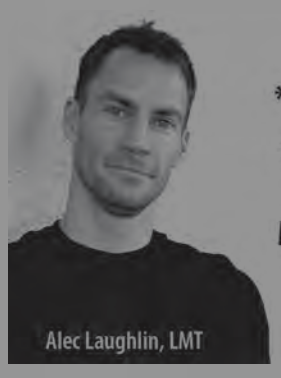

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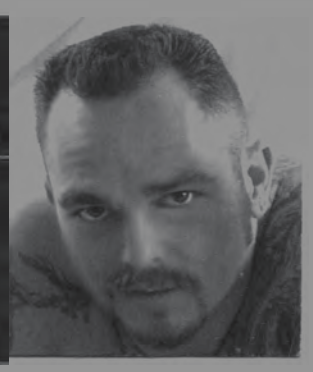

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HOROSCOPES

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Sometimes our best laid plans take an unexpected turn. Expect to spin in these new circles as we enter August and the Sun opposes Neptune and Uranus. If you are intent on following your dreams, don't be surprised to find yourself wafted on clouds. Happy landings!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Proud Rams seem to rely too much on friends to do the heavy social lifting through August. It is not that you want to be totally out of the picture or behind the scenes, its just that you think that they have all the right answers. But as the month progresses you will discover that often you are your own best advisor. So consider all their opinions and then wait.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Retirement sounds pretty good right about now, doesn't it? But don't count your nest egg before it is hatched. Queer Bulls think they can slide off the corporate grid, work from home and still get the job done. But deep down you know that this will only serve to reinforce bad habits and lead you into wasteful diversions. Or is that the plan...?

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Great thoughts have even greater impact, that is if you can sugar-coat the message so everyone swallows it. Pink Twins may desire to pursue personal glory but any notoious actions will impact your professional reputation. So if you have a hankering to join the nude Olympics, expect to see your photo on the front page of the company newsletter.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

If you are asked to fund someone's pet project, find a way to politely decline. This August Gay Crabs find themselves in the unusual position of being hit up for money by folks who weave tall tales of riches. (Usually you are passed over for this honor.) If something is too good to be true it probably is. And that goes double for any international venture.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Proud Lions will have to find the happy balance between their personally goals and the needs of partners now. One thing can lead to another and before you know it, the lines are drawn. Don't let things come to that. You will find that by mid month sexual sparks fly and you can either rejuvenate current relationships or ignite new scratchy ones. 'Bout time!

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

Are you tired and bored at work? Don't listen to your inner voice when it comes to any job-related actions. August could be a great time to unwind and bake on the beach. It is not the best time to change work processes or introduce any "creative" solutions around the office. When in doubt, stick to the tried and true, boring as it is, queer Virgin.

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

Proud Libras love an adoring entourage and August continues to bring friends and followers to your door. Excitement brews and the good times roll. Your social calender revs into overdrive where too much can soon become too too much. And this is bad?? By mid month, you need to get back down to work. Now that will be difficult!

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

Gay Scorps must be careful not to neglect their home and family this August. Your career takes off and offers wonderful opportunities and rewards. Unfortunately this can come at the expense of other areas of your life. There is only so much time in a day and only so much energy and attention that you can focus at one time. Make your money now and then spend it generously later.

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

People view you as a sage through the month and why not? Not only do you have some fairly good ideas, you can express them in a wise and profound manner. Of course all bets are off as the month progresses. If you insist on pushing your point around and at the top brass you might find yourself talking to yourself.... from the sub-basement.

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Love is certainly for sale now. Pink Caps find that their wallet can become an aphrodisiac as lovers ask and receive. It all results in fabulously heady times. But expect a morning after headache when the bills come due. Well, maybe by then you will find someone who can support you instead of vice versa. I suppose we can only dream...

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

August hearkens in a time to reinforce current partnerships or develop new exciting ones. Aqueerians can capture the attention of anyone they want. Not only are you especially generous and considerate, you are also sexy and attractive. Hurry before the magic dissipates and you revert back into a frog... or at least your usual aloof self.

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Stress levels can build up and Guppies are well advised to find outlets to lower the tension. A relaxing vacation is in order. But if time and money are tight, consider various forms of meditation, yoga or even massage. The benefits will be felt by mid-month when you can more easily focus on personal projects without feeling like roadkill.

Gay Couple Robbed And Stabbed At Stockholm Europride

STOCKHOLM, Sweden - A Gay couple was robbed and assaulted over the weekend while attending Stockholm's Europride festivities:

Two homosexual men were stopped by three men and were asked directions. "The three asked them about their sexuality and then stole their mobile phones and money. One of them was then stabbed in the stomach," Stockholm police spokesperson Towe Haegg said. The attack late on Sunday "is considered a hate crime", she said, adding police believed the perpetrators had targeted the couple, aged 25 to 30, because they were Gay.

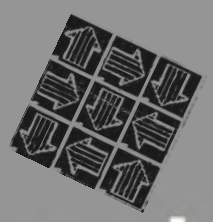
No arrests had been made by midday on Monday (July 28), she said. The three men, believed to be in their 20's, were suspected of attempted murder, aggravated robbery and duress. One of the festival organizers, Jonah Nylund, told Swedish news agency TT the attack was "serious". "There is a general threat scenario against homosexuals, bisexuals, and transsexuals. They are a vulnerable group and during the festival, there are a lot of them all around and they are visible in Stockholm," he said.

LGBT Advocacy Groups Get U.N. Consultative Status

UNITED NATIONS (Observer Update) - Two sexual orientation and gender identity rights groups have been given consultative status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

COC Netherlands and the State Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Transexuals and Bisexuals of Spain (FELGTB) are national organisations representing LGBT communities in the Netherlands and Spain.

"COC Netherlands is delighted about obtaining consultative status with the UN," said Björn van Roozendaal, the group's international advocacy officer. "It means we can join the efforts at the UN to address human rights violations against people with an alternative sexual orientation or gender identity."



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COMMENTARY. . . .

Help Military By Letting Gays Serve Openly

By Deb Price

On Sept. 11, 2001, Navy Capt. Joan Darrah's weekly intelligence briefing turned out to be anything but routine: She and her colleagues watched CNN's coverage of terrorist-hijacked planes ramming into the World Trade Center.

The meeting ended, the closeted Lesbian captain left the Pentagon, and American Airlines Flight 77 slammed into the building. Seven people died in the place where she'd been minutes earlier.

"The reality," Darrah told Congress this past week, "is that if I had been killed, my partner then of 11 years would have been the last to know because I had not dared to list her name" as an emergency contact.

"...That made me realize that 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' was taking a much greater toll than I had ever admitted," she said. "It caused me to refocus my priorities, and on 1 June, 2002, one year earlier than I had planned, I retired."

Darrah, who once served as deputy commander at the Naval Intelligence Command, testified at the first congressional hearing to consider lifting the 1993 ban on Gays serving openly, so patriotic Americans like Darrah could serve without fear of being fired.

So far, 12,600 Lesbians and Gay men, including Arabic linguists, have been kicked out. Countless others didn't re-enlist or ever join.

The House Armed Services subcommittee hearing spotlighted how Congress is changing. Rep. Patrick Murphy, D-Penn, shot down the idea that heterosexuals can't serve professionally alongside Gays: "As a former Army officer, I can tell you that I think that is an insult...."

Another veteran, Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., objected to arguments that open Gays would undermine unit cohesion: "There are people in the military who think unit cohesion would be enhanced if our military reflected the opportunity and freedom that we believe is America."

The military's brass, unfortunately, declined to appear. Advocates of lifting Don't Ask included former Marine Staff Sergeant Eric Alva, the first U.S. soldier wounded in Iraq. Having lost a leg, Alva declared, "I had fought and nearly died to secure rights for others that I myself was not free to enjoy. I had proudly served a country that was not proud of me."

Retired Major Gen. Vance Coleman, an African-American heterosexual who first served in segregated units, said Don't Ask "hurts our military readiness. It undermines our commitment to being a nation where we are all equal. ... And it ties the hands of commanders who want to welcome and retain America's best and brightest...."

But Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness in Livonia, argued Gays in the military create a "sexualized atmosphere" that erodes unit cohesion and morale.

Most Americans want to move beyond Don't Ask. A new ABC News/Washington Post shows 75 percent favor allowing "homosexuals who do publicly disclose their sexual orientation" to serve in the military. That's up from 44 percent in May 1993.

The hearing was an important first step toward repealing an un-American law that hurts the military by perverting its values and rejecting talented Americans who want to serve our country.

(Deb Price is a columnist for the Detroit News, from which this article is reprinted.)

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Newsweek's Hate Crime

By Sara Whitman

I am stunned by an article put out by Newsweek, "Young, Gay and Murdered". At best, it is poor journalism, at it's worst, it is a hate crime in itself, paving the way for a "Gay panic" defense for the kid who pulled the trigger. Remember? Larry King was killed? Shot point blank in the head?

Read the article and you'll be informed that in fact, Larry was the problem. He was always the problem. And while kids are experimenting with sexuality at younger and younger ages overall, being Gay is dangerous. Heterosexual play is fine but, "Kids may want to express who they are, but they are playing grown-up without fully knowing what that means." What does that mean?

The article is one of the poorest forms of journalism I've ever read. If it is an Opinion piece, okay, but to write "Even as homosexuality has become more accepted, the prospect of being openly Gay in middle school raises a troubling set of issues" and to state it as fact?

To whom? The author? Is he an expert? I can go on and on about this piece – and I will – but for today I am so deeply troubled by yet another piece of crappy, sensationalist reporting that is only geared towards selling magazines. It is obviously too boring and too common to focus on a 15 year old boy who snuck a gun into school and blew off another kid's head. A kid with drug abusing parents, with divorce and lack of parental supervision. A kid with an obsession with Hilter.

I know, been there, done that. No one wants to read that story.

Instead, let's focus on the victim. Let's dissect homosexuality at a young age. Not all kids sexuality, not all kids experimentation at younger and younger ages, but homosexuality.

Young, Gay and Murdered. Lesbian assistant principal suspected of a "Gay agenda." King's troubled past leading him to a group home placement shrugged off as a minor event in a series of his own trouble causing. As if kids get taken out of homes because they "accuse" their parents of hitting them. Another top notch effort of reporting, the adoptive father gets to simply say, "Not true," and that's it.

Because it's really about this bad boy, who wore girls clothes, got what he deserved. Homosexuality was the evil here. Playing "grown up" without knowing it could get you killed.

The article takes a kid who is dead and reports how he asked for it? That, in my opinion, is a hate crime.

(Sara Whitman is a columnist for the Huffington Post, from which this column is reprinted from huffingtonpost.com)

SC Teen Was Lying

ANDERSON, South Carolina - A teen in Anderson, South Carolina, now identified as Dwight Clark Ables, who had allegedly returned home from a Gay pride festival to be attacked with a baseball bat by his father. Turns out there was no evidence to support the teen's claims and he is now in custody for filing a false report, according to Q-Notes:

"'After conducting a thorough investigation and the lack of any forensic evidence to support the allegation of the assault, Dwight Clark Ables has been charged with 1 count of Filing a False Police report. He turned himself in today at the Anderson County Sheriff's office," read a press release from the Department's Public Information Officer Suzanne Griffin.

Ables is currently being held at the Anderson County Detention Center where he awaits a bond hearing.

NON-BAR CALENDAR

Wednesday, July 30th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Hand & Foot with Peter at 881-8276.

Friday, August 1st
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Join Merlin and Lee for an evening of Charades. Come out and totally enjoy putting your acting/miming and pantomime skills to the test! For directions and reservations [(a limited space event, please plan ahead and phone early)], place a telephone call to Lee and Merlin, your gracious yet competitive emcees and moderators, at207-5336.

Saturday, August 2nd
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. MSN Potluck at Casa Adobes Church located at 6801 N. Oracle Road. This month we will have a Cowboy / Country Western theme, put on your best western duds and join us for a fun filled Saturday Night Out, bring a friend and enjoy a great meal with your friends at MSN.

Sunday, August 3rd
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Dinner OUT at the Home Town Buffet. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908-6160.

Monday, August 4th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00 p.m. nd Merlin host a word for word fun evening of Scrabble. If you don't know how to play, we'll be glad to teach you. For reservations and directions, please call 207-5336. If you're loquacious, erudite, or a wordsmith; this man's game just may be a triple word score for you!

Tuesday, August 5th
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages. Gay Reading Group 7:00pm. Call Doug At 529-0014 for location and directions.

Wednesday, August 6th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Hand and Foot with Bruce at 743-3890, call for directions and reservations - if you like canasta, you will love Hand and Foot.

Thursday, August 7th
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30pm UNO. Contact Karol at 744-9017 – limited seating, call for reservations and directions.

Saturday August 9th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Shuffle over for Floating Pinochle every Saturday of the month except for first Saturday. Contact Marvin at 745-0304 for directions and information.

Sunday August 10th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30PM MahJongg, limited seating, call Perry for reservations and directions at 321-4387.

7:00p.m. Dinner OUT at Village Inn. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908-6160.

Monday, August 11th
Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Trivial Pursuit. Please call Lee and Merlin at 207-5336 for information and to reserve your place at this limited seating event.

Wednesday, August 13th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Hand and Foot with Marv and Steve 745-0304, call for directions and reservations - if you like canasta, you will love Hand and Foot.

Thursday August 14th
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages. 7:00PM Bridge Join your MSN friends for a night of fun and cards. Call Michael at 326-3555 for reservations and directions.

Saturday, August 16th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Shuffle over for Floating Pinochle every Saturday of the month except for first Saturday. Contact Steve at 664-2076 for directions and information.

Sunday, August 17th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Dinner OUT at Furr's Family Dining. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908-6160.

Monday, August 18th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: Men's Book Club 6:30p.m.Meet Stephen and the group monthly for dinner and discussion of an agreed upon work of gay fiction. Currently, the group meets the 3rd Monday. Contact Stephen at 241-7854 to add yourself to their e-mail list.

Wednesday, August 20th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00pm Hand and Foot with Jack 887-3736, call for directions and reservations - if you like canasta, you will love Hand and Foot.

Thursday August 21st
Men's Social Network. Mexican Dominoes. Open to men of all ages. 6:30PM Call Jack at 887-3736 for reservations and directions.

Saturday August 23rd
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Shuffle over for Floating Pinochle every Saturday of the month except for first Saturday MSN Monthly Pot Luck. Contact Marvin at 745-0304.

Sunday, August 24th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Dinner OUT at Mimi's. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908-6160.

Wednesday, August 27th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Hand and Foot with Lee and Merlin at 207-5336, call for directions and reservations - if you like canasta, you will love Hand and Foot.

Thursday, August 28th
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages. Bridge Join your MSN friends for a night of fun and cards. Call Michael at 326-3555 for reservations and directions.

Sunday, August 31st
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Dinner OUT at Sweet Tomatoes. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908-6160.

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COLORISTS / HAIR DESIGNERS New salon @4400 Hair Salon on Broadway in Bank of Tucson building. Chair rental and new customers welcome. Call 981-0824 or tucsonjoel@aol.com 1253

PERSONALS

YOUTHFUL 60 GWM. New to area. Would like to meet other GM in Green Valley area. Call 717-919-2688 1955

MATURE LESBIAN, new to the area. Looking for friends. Spanish a plus. E-mail: sabo_r@live.com 1252

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CRISES COUNSELING, and relationship trining that can include 'Being a Better Lover' to include the tantric kiss, and better love making. Life Coaching at its holistic best. Call Marc at 881-4582. 1255

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CARETAKERS WANTED. GAY COUPLE Wanted for ranch outside of Tucson. 4-room house provided in return for pool maintenance, odd jobs, etc. One stay at home for daily security. 1258

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NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

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 11:00 pm., Please come and join us! Our next meeting will be held at the Venture-N.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE CLINIC provided daily by the Pima County Health Department. Gay friendly. Confidential. Treatment and Medication too! Any questions? Call 624-8272

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.

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

Start getting more out of life with TUCSON PRIME TIMERS. We're the local chapter of Prime Timers Worldwide, the preeminent social organization for mature gay and bi men as well as younger (21+) men who enjoy their company. Each month we sponsor a wide range of dining events, cultural enrichment activities, parties, meetings, bowling, day trips, picnics, tours and much more. Visitors are always welcome. For info call our message phone 520 731-3485. Visit our website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

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

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

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

SOURCES UNLIMITED, a Lesbian & Gay referral service. Business and individual listings are free of charge. All information available to anyone just simply by asking. 322-5655. Leave message. TucsonSources@aol.com

INNER WISDOM - Try hypnotherapy for pain relief, past life exploration and addiction release. Also available: Spiritual Counseling and Dream Interpretation. 579-9020

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)790-5775 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 19 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 commited 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.

THIS WAY OUT, 1/2 hour national GLBT show. 4:30 p.m. on Sundays only on 91.3 FM, Community Radio KXCI.

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

SOUTHERN ARIZONA GENDER ALLIANCE (SAGA). The Southwest's largest transgender and gender-diversity advocacy organization. Speakers and panelists available. General meetings monthly on the 1st Mondays at 7pm; 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, 6:30 p.m. each month at Santa Cruz Lutheran Church, 6809 S. Cardinal Ave. For information visit www.lctucson.org write: LC, 7014 E. Golf Links Road, PMB 212, Tucson, AZ 85730.

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

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 Lori at Wingspan, 624-1779, ext. 20. 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.

THE BROTHERS OF THE COMPASSIONATE WAY. Pagan spiritual group for gay, bisexual, transgendered men. Box 41623, Tucson, AZ 85717.

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.: 406-0740

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-2am; Visit the outdoor patio enjoy aa cocktail or two. Sports on all day!!! MLB; WNBA; You call it!! Music with DJ/Hill starts at 9pm.

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 11am. Beer Bust Sunday - $1 draft beers (12 oz), domestic only; $2 domestic long necks. Texas Hold-Em Poker at 3 & 6. No cash involved - Play for Points & Prizes. SIN Nite - drink discounts for Service Industry employees

IBT's -Troy's Recovery Bar noon-4pm. 4-7:30 Karaoke on the patio. Benefit B-B-Q for the Pride Parade 5:30-7:30 and dance with DJ Mike Lopez 9pm to close.

VENTURE-N - Open 10am. Patio open 3pm. $2.00 Bloody Marys or Screws til 3pm Patio Beer Bust 3-7.Burger BBQ 5-7. Selection of burger meats to choose from. $3 proceeds go to Pet Watch (helping HIV/AIDS 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 3pm-2am. Visit the outdoor patio enjoy aa cocktail or two. Drink specials every hour.

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON – Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 p.m. $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Bucket o" Beer - $10.00 Domestic, $12.00 Imports (5 beers to a bucket, for 2 or more people, Guinness 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, DJ Craig Carter 10pm-2am $1.50 well vodka drinks, All drink specials not available during special events.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio 6pm. Free pool til 4pm. $2.75 Skyy Martinis 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 3pm-2am. Visit the outdoor patio enjoy aa cocktail or two. Drink specials every hour.

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON - 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 & Alaskan Amber). Ladies Only Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6:00 p.m.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, Tropical Tuesdays $2.50 Tropical drinks and DJ Craig Carter playing Retro Music 70's, 80's and 90's 9pm-close.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Spaghetti Nite (2nd Tuesday every month $2.00).

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 3pm-2am. 1/2 Price Happy Hour til 8pm. Wild Wednesdays. DJHill Spins til 2am. This is an 18 and over event..

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON -Open 3pm. Happy Hour All Day $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitchers. Texas Hold-'Em Poker at 6 & 8:30 pm Play for points & Prizes. No cash involved.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, "Diva-Licious" show 9pm w/ Bunny Fu Fu& Friends. After show dance with DJ Q til 2am,

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm. $2.75 Cuervo Margaritas 4-8pm

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 3pm-2am. Karaoke starts @9:30pm. With 2 for 1 starting after the first singer! (Poker Pub will resume in the Fall).

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.. .

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints, $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg.. Pitcher. Bicardi Thursdays - $2.50 Bicardi Rum. July 3rd Karaoke's back 8-10:30pm

IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, Boyz Nite Out with your Bartenders & GoGo Boys dancing in their undies and DJ Mike Lopez spinning Top 40 & All request $1.75 Long Islands and $1.50 Tequila shots 10pm-2am.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio open 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm. Pool Tourney 7pm. $3 entry. Special prices for players. Steak Nite (3rd Thursday during summer). Bring your own or get it here $6.00.

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 3pm-2am. With incredible Happy Hour pricing from 5-8pm. Noche de calor w/DJ Hill jugando la mejor en musicia latino! Todos los viernes por la noche, la musica comienza a las 9. Shot specials cada nora!!

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON - Open 3pm. Happy Hour 3 - 8 pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 Sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Pitcher. $2.25 All Mexican Beers. Free Dance Lessons at 7:30 p.m. Country Dancing 8:30 p.m. to close with DJ Pat.

IBT's - Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, 9pm Hot Dance with DJ Mike Lopez outside on the patio and DJ Raynman spinning club music inside.9pm-2am.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio open 7pm. Free Pool til 4pm.

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 3pm - 2am. Patio opens @9pm. BEER PONG tournament on the patio every Saturday night!! DJ Hill 9pm. Don't forget to catch the WNBA games every Sat on our 51" flat screens!!

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.

HOWL AT THE MOON - 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, 5-8pm karaoke & Teryaki Kabobs on the patio. 8:30pm Show time w/ Bunny FuFu or Janee Starr. DJ Q spinning Club Music inside & Mike Lopez spinning on the patio 10pm to close.

VENTURE-N - Open 9am. Patio Bar open 3pm. Patio Beer Bust 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.

BRIEFLY "Q"

Fueled by cheap drink prices and nearly naked, toned men dancing for tips, Tuesday night in the Dallas LGBT community has become "Trashy Tuesday." But Crews Inn co-owner David Moore says he plans to remove the "T" – for Transgender, that is – from the clientele at his Fitzhugh Avenue bar on Tuesday nights. "Drag queens act like they are divas and think they can't do no wrong," Moore said. "They have stolen money straight off the bar, hassled costumers for drinks and locked themselves in the bathroom with a bunch of guys. And with Tuesday being our busiest night, there is just no way for me to keep the draq queens under control then. I don't want draq queens in here that are going to misbehave." That's why Moore and his employees began asking Transgender women and draq queens to leave.

Hate crimes in Los Angeles County soared last year to their highest mark in five years even as overall crime dropped across the region, according to a report released Thursday (July 24). The annual report by the county's human relations commission shows 763 hate crimes were reported in 2007, a 28% increase over 2006. The numbers buck last year's overall crime trends, which saw a decrease of 6% in Los Angeles County and 5% in the city of Los Angeles, the report notes. The commission said 111 hate crimes based on sexual orientation were reported, a 9% increase from 2006, and more than 90% were against Gay men. The report said another 105 hate crimes were based on religion – a 17% increase – and nearly three quarters of them were anti-Jewish. The most common hate crimes were those motivated by race, with 310 committed against black people and 125 against Latinos. However, crimes in which anti-immigrant slurs were used dropped slightly. A majority of the hate crimes involved vandalism and simple assault, but aggravated assault was involved in 187 of them, a nearly 90% increase over the year before.

A Houston church took what it calls an "extraordinary" step by ordaining the first openly Lesbian Lutheran pastor in Texas. Lura Groen says she's thrilled to be pastor of the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in southwest Houston. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America does ordain Gay pastors, but only if they agree to remain celibate. Groen, however, has refused, claiming heterosexual colleagues are not held to the same standard. She says church members have been supportive. "There's a very good fit between the values of this congregation and the values I want to espouse as a preacher – to be telling God's love to all the world and the way that that calls us to treat everyone fairly," said Pastor Lura Groen. Two other American Evangelical Lutheran congregations have ordained openly Gay pastors without sanctions.

A Broward County Judge ruled that Fort Lauderdale Police unfairly entrapped a Gay man in Holiday Park by luring him into a sexual situation, inducing him to expose himself to an undercover officer before arresting him on false prostitution charges about a block outside of the park. Judge Gary Cowart dismissed the charges against Michael Marsh, a Fort Lauderdale man who was encountered undercover Fort Lauderdale officer Nick Coffin Aug. 20 near the baseball fields of Holiday Park. The park has been under surveillance by police sting operations that target public sex and drug use there. Mayor Jim Naugle has used the arrests there as a platform for his comments against Gay cruising in parks and public bathrooms.

Michigan Universities that spend taxpayer dollars to provide health insurance benefits to their employees' live-in partners should lose 5 percent of their state funding, one local lawmaker says. State Rep. Dave Agema, R-Grandville, will be pushing the issue after Grand Valley State University last week approved providing the benefits to unmarried partners of faculty and staff. "It's a way to get around the law that was passed. No one else gets those benefits, and it's a waste of taxpayers' money," Agema said, just days after he called GVSU's tuition "a good bang for the buck." GVSU joined several other public universities in extending employees' health insurance benefits to unmarried couples. The benefit applies to Gay and Lesbian couples, as well as any other live-in partner or friend who has lived with staff or faculty member for 18 months or more. It does not cover relatives or tenants.

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Campaign 2008 Update:

McCain Caves, LGBT Likes Obama

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WASHINGTON, D.C (Observer Update) - Earlier this month, Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) took an extreme position on Gay adoption, telling the New York Times he believes in "traditional" families even if it means leaving children in orphanages. "I think that we've proven that both parents are important in the success of a family so, no I don't believe in Gay adoption," he said, reported thinkprogress.com

But in follow-up statement, McCain aide Jill Hazelbaker backtracked, stating, "McCain could have been clearer." She added that the senator would support Gay adoption if there were no alternative: However, as an adoptive father himself...he recognizes that there are many abandoned children who have yet to find homes. McCain believes that in those situations that caring parental figures are better for the child than the alternative.

Interviewed on ABC Sunday (July 27), however, McCain reverted to his original radical position, telling George Stephanopolous that he does not support Gay adoption in any circumstance:

McCAIN: I think that family values are important, when we have two parent – families that are of parents that are the traditional family.

Q: But there are several hundred thousand children in the country who don't have a home. And if a Gay couple wants to adopt them, what's wrong with that?

MCCAIN: I am for the values that two parent families, the traditional family represents.

McCain didn't acknowledge that a two-parent family can also consist of same-sex parents. Unlike his spokeswoman, he also didn't recognize that rejecting adoptions by same-sex parents means leaving thousands of children with no parents. As Winnie Stachelberg and Robert Gordon noted, about 130,000 children wait in the foster care system each year for a permanent home. And every year, half of these children are never placed. In the interview, McCain repeatedly said that he is "for the values and principles that two parent families represent." He also said preserving traditional families is "not the reason why I'm running for president of the United States." Just seconds later, however, he reversed course and bluntly stated, "I'm running for president of the United States because I want to help with family values." ...

Barack Obama leads John McCain among registered voters 44 percent to 35 percent, while Bob Barr, the Libertarian candidate and Ralph Nader each receive 2 percent, a new Harris Interactive poll reported, reported advocate.com. Sixteen percent of registered voters are not sure whom they will vote for.

Among LGBT adults, 60 percent favor Obama while 14 percent favor McCain. Three percent of LGBT adults favor Barr, while 1 percent choose Nader. Six percent choose "other," while 17 percent of all LGBT voters are not yet sure which candidate to support – comparable to the general population.

Among independents, Obama has a 12-point lead (38 percent to 26 percent), but one-quarter of independents are not sure, 4 percent would vote for Bob Barr and 3 percent for Ralph Nader.

The findings also show that 90 percent of African-Americans are voting for Obama, as are six in 10 Latinos. Whites, however, are leaning towards McCain over Obama (40 percent versus 34 percent).

The results of this Harris Poll were complied from 2,690 U.S. adults surveyed online July 3-11 by Harris Interactive.

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