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The Greater Arizona Community

OBSERVER

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Bailout Bill Defeated, Stocks Plunge

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - The House on Monday (September 29) defeated a $700 billion emergency rescue package, ignoring urgent pleas from President Bush and bipartisan congressional leaders to quickly bail out the staggering financial industry.

Stocks plummeted on Wall Street even before the 228-205 vote to reject the bill was announced on the House floor. When the critical vote was tallied, too few members of the House were willing to support the unpopular measure with elections just five weeks away. Ample no votes came from both the Democratic and Republican sides of the aisle.

The GOP is trying to blame the failure on 'hurt feelings' from a speech given by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi before the vote. Rep. Barney Frank mocked the GOP reasoning in a news conference. Said Frank: "Here's the story. There's a terrible crisis affecting the American economy. We have come together on a bill to alleviate the crisis. And because somebody hurt their feelings, they decide to punish the country. I mean, I would not have imputed that degree of pettiness and hypersensitivity. We also have – as the leader will tell you, who's been working with them – don't believe they had the votes, and I believe they're covering up the embarrassment of not having the votes. But think about this. Somebody hurt my feelings, so I will punish the country. That's hardly plausible. And there are 12 Republican members who were ready to stand up for the economic interest of America, but not if anybody insulted them. I'll make an offer. Give me those 12 people's names and I will go talk uncharacteristically nicely to them and tell them what wonderful people they are and maybe they'll now think about the country."

All of Arizona's eight Members of Congress voted against the bill. A spokeswoman for Democratic U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell of Phoenix said Reps. Raúl Grijalva and Gabrielle Giffords joined the entire Arizona delegation in voting against the measure.

In a statement, Grijalva said he could not support the bill because it did not do enough for working families who may be in jeopardy of losing their homes and did not have enough oversight as to how the money would be spent. "I am not in disagreement that there is a financial crisis in our country," he said in a statement. "I am in disagreement of a proposal that is rushed and more importantly does not advocate equally for main street and strong protections for working families."

Giffords had similar reservations, said her spokesman C.J. Karamargin. "She believes action is needed to address the status of the financial markets but she wasn't convinced that this bill was the right one and thinks it was rushed," he said in an e-mail.

After the vote, Giffords was boarding a plane to come back to the district, but Karamargin said she would return to Washington D.C. if the bailout was re-introduced. Meanwhile, Grijalva's spokeswoman Natalie Luna said the congressman would stay in Washington D.C. in anticipation of a second vote.

In his statement, Grijalva said he wants a pay-as-you-go structure, a re-working of bankruptcy laws to help protect homeowners and the ability for Congress to halt payments. "Pursuing this historic deal without strong oversight and ensuring strict regulations occurred for passage is a bad deal," he said. "The language allows for an oversight Committee to only critique the proposal, not halt actions."

Gay Rape Serial Killer Sentenced To Life Without Parole

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana (Observer Update) - A man who raped and murdered eight young men over a 10-year period has been sentenced to eight consecutive life sentences in Louisiana. Police said Ronald Dominique lured his victims with the promise of sex in exchange for money, or by showing them a picture of a good-looking woman, supposedly his wife, and saying he wanted them to have sex with her.

Once he got them to his house, he would ask to tie them up. If they refused, he allowed them to leave. If they agreed, he raped and then strangled or suffocated them. Many of his victims' bodies were found dumped in sugar cane fields, often without shoes, a connection that helped police tie the cases together.

Dominique - from Bayou Blue, a small Cajun settlement about 60 miles south-west of New Orleans - was arrested in December 2006 after the ten-year killing spree. At the time, authorities said he confessed to raping and murdering about two dozen young men in four Louisiana parishes.

Events Mark 10th Anniversary Of Slain Gay Student

LARAMIE, Wyoming (Observer Update) - Around the country people are preparing to remember the tenth anniversary of a brutal anti-Gay attack near Laramie, Wyoming that left twenty-one year-old Matthew Shepard dead, reported ontopmagazine.com.

Shepard, a student at the University of Wyoming, was beaten, shackled to a post and left to die in a field by two men he had met in a Gay bar. He was found comatose, but died five days later on October 12, 1998. The crime triggered a nationwide discussion on violence against Gays and Lesbians. Particularly, anti-Gay crimes committed against young Gay men and women.

The University of Wyoming honored Shepard's memory Saturday with the dedication of a bench outside the university's arts and sciences building. "Matthew Wayne Shepard Dec. 1, 1976 - Oct. 12, 1998. Beloved son, brother, and friend. He continues to make a difference. Peace be with him and all who sit here," reads the inscription on the bench.

"We've learned a lot, we've talked a lot; we do it in public forums now," Judy Shepard, Matthew's mother, said at the dedication. "So it's a wonderful tribute to Matt that these kinds of things are discussed."

Matthew Shepard's parents have become vocal supporters of hate crimes legislation. Judy Shepard lamented the fact that Wyoming has not adopted such laws. "I regret that," she said. "We still have some negative legislation attempts and discussion and those kind of things. But I'm confident that as the Equality State we can move forward, set an example and really make a statement about what it means to be equal to everybody else."

Matthew Shepard

How hate effects the Gay and Lesbian community was the focus of a Chicago rally in memory of Shepard. "Violence does not happen in a vacuum," Truth Wins Out Executive Director Wayne Besen, a scheduled speaker at the rally, wrote on his blog. "There is a multi-million dollar anti-Gay industry that dehumanizes us every day. They pump millions of dollars into making GLBT [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender] people appear to be moral monsters and then act surprised when hate crimes occur. We are marching to speak out against this poisonous rhetoric that has harmed so many families."

On October 13, the Matthew Shepard Foundation plans to mark the tenth anniversary of the anti-Gay crime with a candlelight ceremony at Loring Park in Minneapolis. The two men who killed Shepard are serving life sentences in prison. On the net: The Matthew Shepard Foundation at matthewshepard.org

Pride In The Desert October 18

TUCSON (Observer Update) - The date for this year's Pride on Parade and Celebration is Saturday, October 18, with the parade beginning at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 11:00 a.m. in Reid Park.

Pride in the Desert is an all-day festival at the DeMeester Outdoor Performance Center in Reid Park that attracts more than 6000 participants each year. The festival features live local, regional, national and international entertainers on our main stage. In addition, we have multiple entertainment venues, commercial and nonprofit exhibitors, a food court, youth and children's areas, and much more. Now celebrating 31 Years of Pride in the Desert, this event continues to grow.

This year's main stage headliner will be former American Idol contestant Kimberly Caldwell. Caldwell is a singer, actress, and television personality who gained national recognition during her time on the second season of the television phenomenon, "American Idol," and is also known for her work as an entertainment correspondent and host for the TV Guide Network.

Tucson Pride are also extremely pleased to add God-dess and She and Eric Himan to this year's entertainment line-up. God-des & She is comprised of two incredibly talented mid-western Hip-Hop & Soul singers that began their journey through the music scene with just a rhyme and a dream. These small town girls with big town ambitions quit their jobs and moved to New York in 2004 from Madison, Wisconsin. Over the last four years, it's been their intense drive and incredible focus that has gained them their notoriety and helped them to burst onto the music scene and take the industry by storm!

Eric Himan has been described in the following way: If a mad scientist combined the genes of Jason Mraz, Gavin DeGraw and Edwin McCain and then, in a moment of brilliance, threw in some Tracy Chapman for good measure, the result would be Eric Himan. Spreading his musical seed from New England to the Southwest and everywhere in between, Himan has become an LGBT folk hero of sorts, playing festivals, clubs, bars and coffeehouses both Gay and mainstream.- Jenny Sherwin, Gay.com

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UPDATE

Pride In The Desert October 18

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In addition to these incredible entertainers, we also are thrilled to welcome back east coast singer-songwriter Gregory Douglass. Gregory Douglass has been hailed as one of the bright new stars of tomorrow and we know you will not want to miss this encore performance.

Rounding out our entertainment on the main stage, Tucson Pride are very pleased to welcome local acts as well as acts from across the state and around the nation. This year's roster includes: 8 Inch Betsy; Clint Crishner; Namoli Brennett; Sabra Faulk and Amber Norgaard; Liz Stahler; Too Much Information; and Courtney Robbins, as well as presenting on a second stage of live entertainment, the CoffeeHouse Stage! Scheduled entertainers on the CoffeeHouse Stage include: Desert Voices; Lisa Otey & Diane Von Duerzen; Arthur Migliazza; Reveille; and T-Squares.

For more information, go online to tucsonpride.org.

Coming Out, All Ages, All Stages - October 7 & 11

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Intergenerational stories to celebrate 20 years of National Coming Out Day. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender folks and their Allies (friends and family) will share tales of their remarkable journeys from the closet to being out and proud. Part One will take place Tuesday, October 11, 7:00 p.m. at the Gallagher Theater on the UA Campus and part two will take place, Saturday, October 11, 2:00 p.m. at Wingspan, 425 E. 7th St.

Six amazing storytellers will have 10 minutes to tell their Coming Out story, whether it was 50 years or ago or it just happened yesterday. They will take us along on their journey from where they were to where they are! Come on...be Out, be Loud, be Proud. Visit the Odyssey website, www.Odysseystorytelling.com, to see who's telling. Sponsored by UA Office of LGBTQ Affairs, The Center for Student Involvement and Leadership and Odyssey Storytelling.

For more information, contact Penelope Starr (520) 730-4112.

AIDSWALK 2008, Everyone's Walk October 19

TUCSON - Join the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation, Desert Diamond Casino and Hotels and almost 6,000 walkers and runners on the University of Arizona Campus Mall, 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., for the 20th Annual AIDSWALK in Tucson.

Register to walk the 5K or run the 10K, online at aidswalktucson.com, or by calling (520) 791-WALK. This event supports the programs and services provided by SAAF for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as supporting prevention programs to halt the spread of this infection. IT'S EVERYBODY'S WALK!

For more information, contact Mae Krueger (520) 791-9266, E-mail: info@aidswalktucson.com.

Wingspan Anti-Violence Programs Volunteer Training, Oct. 10-12

TUCSON (Observer Update) - Attend a free volunteer training for the Wingspan Anti-Violence Program and learn how to advocate for individuals and communities impacted by violence.

Wingspan's Anti-Violence Program provides 24-hour advocacy, crisis intervention, and referral services to LGBT survivors and their allies who are affected by violence and discrimination. The training takes place on October 10 from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., October 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Oct 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. WIngspan asks that participants attend all three sessions.

For more information, contact Madeline Porta, (520) 624-1779, ext 128.

AIDSWALK 2008 Everybody's Walk!

Request An Early Ballot

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - Early voting begins on October 2. You can request an early ballot from your local your County Recorder. To request an early ballot, please see the instructions below for your county.

Apache County: Please call (928) 337-7514.

Cochise County: Please call (520) 432-8354 or (520) 432-8358.

Coconino County: Please call (928) 779-6589 or 800-793-6181.

Gila County: Requests for an early ballot can be made by email by following these instructions.

Graham County: Request a ballot via this online form (graham.az.gov/Graham_CMS/display.aspx?id=138&kmsel=c580a7b_80_88_138_1)

Greenlee County: Download this PDF form print it out, fill it in, and mail it to: Greenlee County Recorder, P.O. Box 1625, Clifton, AZ 85533.

La Paz County: Contact the La Paz County Recorder's office:

* by phone: (928) 669-6136 or 1-888-526-8685 within the County only

* or by mail: 1112 Joshua Ave., Ste. 201, Parker, AZ 85344.

Maricopa County: Request a ballot via this online form (recorder.maricopa.gov/earlyvoteballotnet/).

Mojave County: Request a ballot via this online form (legacy.co.mohave.az.us/depts/recorder/early_ballot_req.asp.)

Navajo County: Request a ballot via this online form (www.navajocountyaz.gov/recorder/earlyballotonline.aspx)

Pima County: Request a ballot via this online form (www.recorder.pima.gov/earlyballot/default.aspx.)

Pinal County: You can request a ballot via this online form (pinalcountyaz.gov/Departments/Recorder/Pages/VoterRegFormEnglish.aspx.)

Santa Cruz County: Download this PDF form (co.santa-cruz.az.us/recorder/pdf/PE08%20request%20form.pdf), print it out, fill it in, and mail it to: Santa Cruz County Recorder, 2150 N Congress Drive, Nogales, AZ, 85621.

Yavapai County: Request a ballot via this online form (apps.co.yavapai.az.us/earlyballot/.)

Yuma County: Contact the Yuma County Recorder's Office, 410 S. Maiden Lane, Suite B, Yuma, (928) 373-6034.

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Observer Recommendations For November General Election

PHOENIX (Observer Update) - Thursday, October 2, marks the first day registered voters in Arizona will be able to cast their ballot for this year's general election, scheduled to take place with the polls opening on Tuesday, November 4.

For those individuals not registered to vote and wish to do so to either vote early or at the polls, the deadline is Monday, October 6 by midnight. People can go online at servicearizona.com/webapp/evoter/ and sign up to vote.

Those Arizona voters will have many decisions to make before cast their ballots in the upcoming election: from the presidential contest to see who will inherit the complete mess created by the "Bush Crime Family," Congressional races, ballot propositions, the Arizona Legislature, county posts to local school boards, many posts and questions will have to be answered and fill, as mandating by federal and state law.

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With that, the editorial staff of the Observer has compiled a list of recommendations for contested elections, basing the choices on statements, actions, position papers and voting records on the issues of concern to the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender), HIV/AIDS and straight supportive communities.

President - Barack Obama

U.S. ~~HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIV~~ES

Congressional District 1 - Ann Kirkpatrick
Congressional District 2 - John Thrasher
Congressional District 3 - Bob Lord
Congressional District 4 - Ed Pastor
Congressional District 5 - Harry Mitchell
Congressional District 6 - Rebecca Schneider
Congressional District 7 - Raul Grijalva
Congr~~essional District 8 - Gabrielle Giff~~ords

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Proposition 100 (Protect Our Homes Act) - No
Proposition 101 (Medical Choice for Arizona) - No
Proposition 102 (Marriage Protection Amendment) - No Again!
Proposition 105 (Majority Rules Initiative) - No
Proposition 200 (Payday Loans) - No
Proposition 201 (Homeowners Bill of Rights) - Yes
Proposition 300 (Legislative Pay Raise) - No
Pr~~oposition 403 (TUSD Override) - Yes~~

Arizona Corporation Commission - Sandra Kennedy, Paul Newman

Arizona Senate - District 25 - Manuel Alvarez
Arizona House - District 25 - Ric Boyer, Pat Fleming

Arizona Senate - District 26 - Cheryl Cage
Arizona House - District 26 - Don Jorgensen, Nancy Young Wright

Arizona Senate - District 27 - Jorge Luis Garcia
Arizona House - District 27 - Olivia Cajero Bedford, Phil Lopes

Arizona House - District 29 - Matt Heinz, Daniel Patterson

Arizona Senate - District 30 - Georgette Valle
Arizona House - District 30 - Andrea Dalessandro (VOTE ONLY)

(Editors Note: In the race for the Arizona House in District 30, there are three candidates for two open seats but in this case, there is only one choice, Andrea Dalessandro, to represent us in the Arizona Legislature come January 2009 and like the hair care product's slogan, "she is worth it." One vote in this race for an individual whose twice her opponents.)

Pima County Board of Supervisors - District 3 - Sharon Bronson

Pima County Attorney - Barbara LaWall

Pima County Sheriff - Clarence Dupnik

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SMU B'Ball Player Says Coach Challenged Her Sex Life

DALLAS, Texas (Observer Update) - Playing college basketball is like working at a job, Jennifer Colli says. Her sexual orientation and who she's sleeping with, even if it's a teammate, are her business, not the coach's.

The former SMU player is suing the school and head coach Rhonda Rompola (pictured) for revoking her scholarship after Colli complained to the athletic director about what Colli said she considered to be inappropriate questions and comments regarding her sex life and other Gay relationships on the team. "We're alleging that they are retaliating against her," Michael Kelly, one of Colli's attorneys, said in an interview. In a statement, SMU said that two university offices investigated Colli's allegations.

"The results of the investigations did not support the student's claims," the statement said. "SMU stands by its findings and will address these issues in court." SMU declined a written request from The Morning News to interview Rompola, but the coach issued a statement: "It is regrettable that the plaintiffs in this lawsuit are attempting to try their case in the public arena through the media. I will not respond to their unfounded allegations and look forward to presenting the facts through the proper venue in court."

Google Comes Out Against Calif. Marriage Ban

SILICON Valley, California (Observer Update) - As an Internet company, Google is an active participant in policy debates surrounding information access, technology and energy. Because our company has a great diversity of people and opinions – Democrats and Republicans, conservatives and liberals, all religions and no religion, straight and Gay – we do not generally take a position on issues outside of our field, especially not social issues.

So when Proposition 8 appeared on the California ballot, it was an unlikely question for Google to take an official company position on. However, while there are many objections to this proposition – further government encroachment on personal lives, ambiguously written text – it is the chilling and discriminatory effect of the proposition on many of our employees that brings Google to publicly oppose Proposition 8.

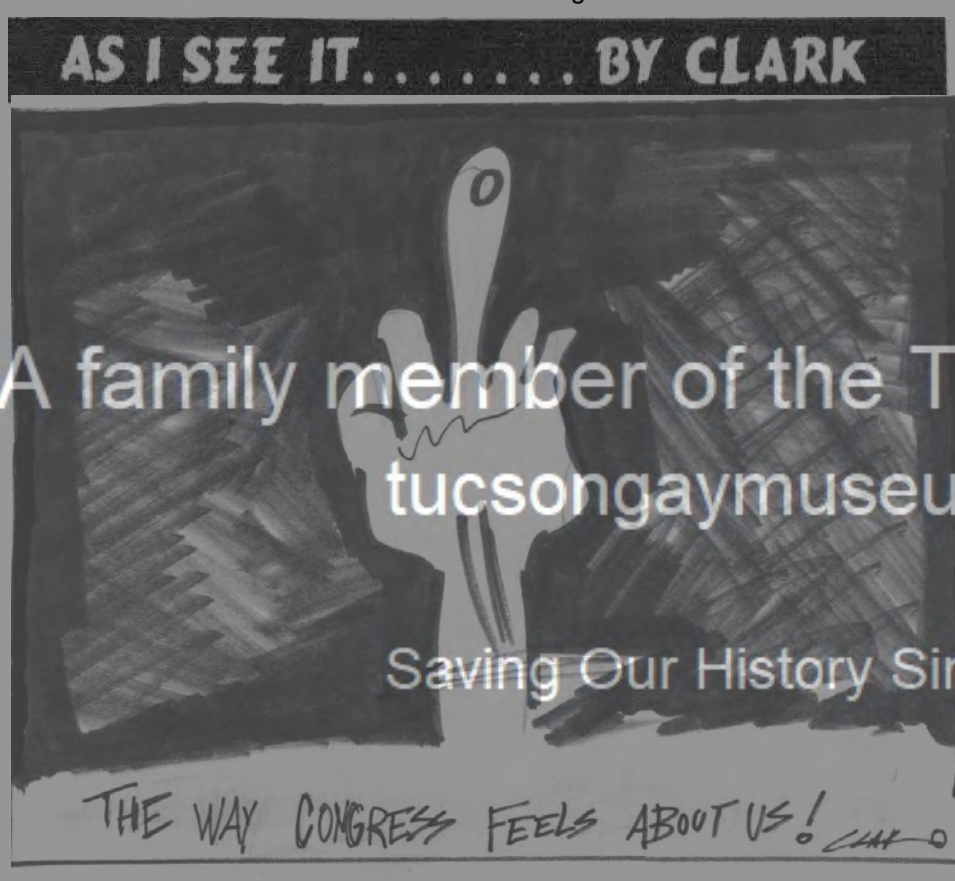
While we respect the strongly-held beliefs that people have on both sides of this argument, we see this fundamentally as an issue of equality. We hope that California voters will vote no on Proposition 8 – we should not eliminate anyone's fundamental rights, whatever their sexuality, to marry the person they love.

Mormon Says Church Threatens Excommunication For Supporting G/L Marriage

HASTINGS, Nebraska (Observer Update) - For more than 20 years, Andrew Callahan has been a devoted member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But now the Hastings, Nebraska man is being hauled up before a disciplinary hearing that could result in his excommunication from the Mormon faith.

His crime: opposing a call by Mormon leaders to support a proposed constitutional amendment in California to ban same-sex marriage. A letter from Thomas S. Monson, president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was read from the pulpit in church congregations in June, calling on church members in California to support Proposition 8. Church members in other areas of the country were urged to send money to the effort.

The position rankled Callahan, who set up a Web site to voice opposition. "Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been taught, 'We do not believe it just to mingle religious influence with civil government ...'" the Web site says. It urges other Mormons to sign a petition opposing the church's stand on Gay marriage. Callahan said he has received a letter from his bishop saying "I have participated in conduct unbecoming of a member of the church" and ordering him to a hearing. "I believe in standing up for what I believe in and I guess, unfortunately I am not supposed to stand up for what I believe in if I disagree with them and I do," Callahan told KHAS-television. The case is being closely watched by other Mormons who oppose the church view on same-sex marriage.



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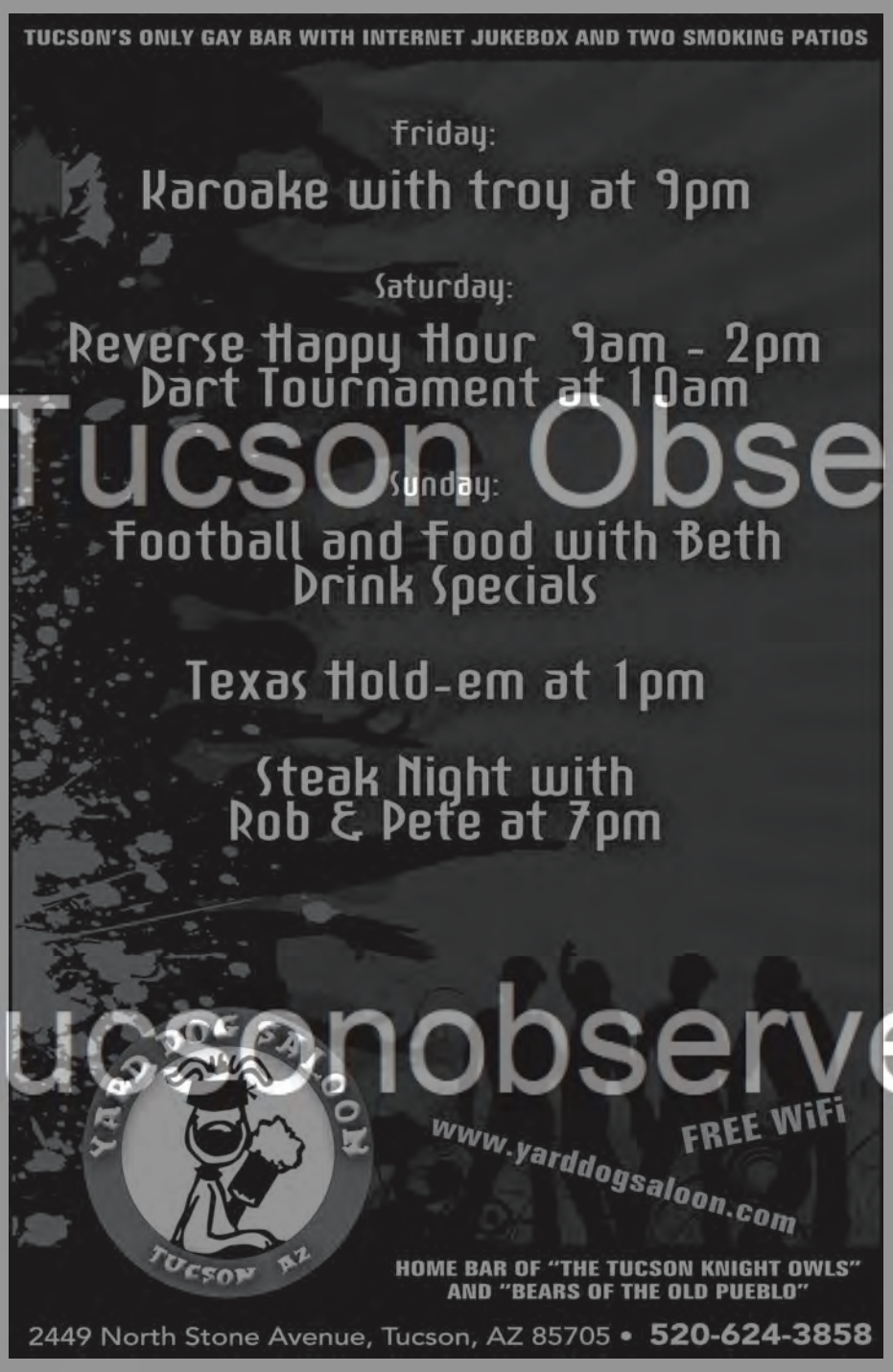


New Study Puts Cost Of Federal DP Benefits At $43.5 Million; Senate Holds Hearing

LOS ANGELES, California (Observer Update) - A new study from the Williams Institute at UCLA has found that providing domestic-partner benefits to federal employees in a same-sex relationship would add $43.5 million to the federal budget in the first year of coverage and about $675 million over the course of the next decade.

The Senate Committee of Homeland Security and Government Affairs held a hearing Wednesday morning on the bill that would provide DP benefits to federal employees, the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act. Committee chairman Sen. Joseph Lieberman, a sponsor of the bill, was expected to reference the report's findings during the hearing, thereby entering them into the record. GOP senator Susan Collins of Maine also helped organize the hearing.

The benefits for federal employees would include family health insurance, pension and survivor benefits, and relocation expenses for families who are transferred. For State Department employees abroad, it would also include access to anti-terrorism and language training, medical facilities, and evacuation services. "Adding partners to health care coverage is the most expensive part of the bill," said study coauthor Naomi Goldberg, the Peter J. Cooper Public Policy Fellow at the Williams Institute. "But the cost increase of $43.5 million in year one is only 0.4% of total health care expenditures, a tiny fraction that is consistent with the experience of the thousands of private employers offering domestic-partner benefits." More than 30,000 employees with same-sex partners would benefit if Congress enacts this bill, according to the study, reported advocate.com.

Rachel Maddow Continues Ratings Lead Over Larry King

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - In its second week on the air, Rachel Maddow's new MSNBC continued to show a slight lead over Larry King Live in total viewers. The Rachel Maddow Show has marked a huge jump from MSNBC's third-quarter ratings average, Television Week reported.

In its second week The Rachel Maddow Show averaged 1.72 million viewers to Larry King's 1.68 million. Both shows were bested by Hannity & Colmes on Fox News, which averaged 3.59 million viewers. The report suggests Hannity received a huge boost last week thanks to a softball interview with vice-presidential nominee Sarah Palin.

Prior to Maddow's debut, MSNBC had been averaging just under 1 million viewers for the third quarter. Maddow's popularity may be sending a message to right-wingers who promised to boycott MSNBC for hiring the Lesbian political pundit, advocate.com reported.

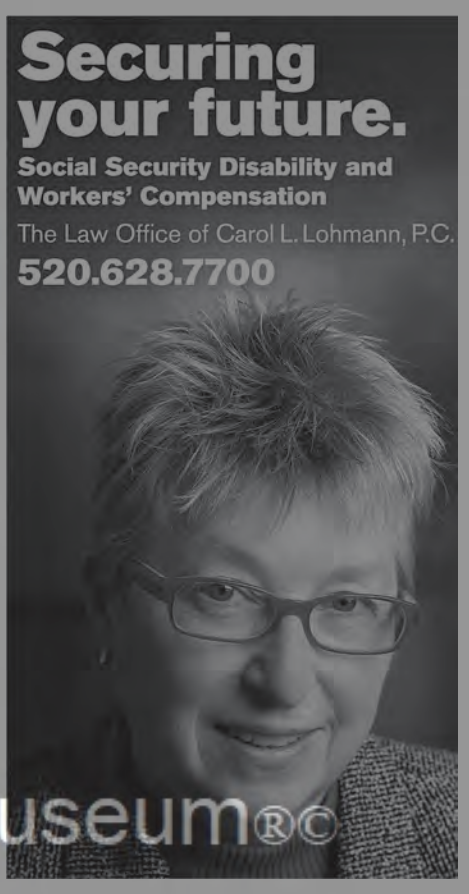
American Alrlines Backs Queer Inclusion, But Is It Enough?

DALLAS, Texas (Observer Update) - American Airlines prides itself on its inclusion and have made great strides in including queer employees in their mix: they're the first airline to include gender identity in their internal non-discrimination policy. That said, it come as no surprise that the aviation company announced they support non-discrimination legislation for sexuality and gender identity.

Their announcement, however, doesn't come without its own baggage. Pledging their support to equality, American Airlines released a press release backing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act: "(We are) proud to express our strong support of federal workplace non-discrimination legislation that would extend basic job protections to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Americans. We are proud to have been the first major airline to implement same-sex domestic partner benefits, first to implement both sexual orientation and gender identity in our workplace non-discrimination policies, and first to have a recognized LGBT employee resource group - GLEAM.

"Our endorsement of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) is consistent with our longstanding Statement of Equal Opportunity ... The principles fostered by ENDA are consistent with our corporate principles in treating all employees with fairness and respect. On behalf of our more than 80,000 employees, we appreciate your consideration and encourage Congress to enact this important legislation."

Though certainly a step in the right direction, trans activists may have something to say about this, because ENDA does not currently include gender identity, but simply sexuality. It's great that American Airlines supports their queer employees and wants to do more for the rest of the nation, but if it really wanted to make a mark, the company could have come out against ENDA and instead said they're pushing for gender inclusive legislation.



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COMMENTARY. . . .

by John Corvino

Clay's Gay - So What?

Clay Aiken is Gay. This is not news. Lindsay Lohan might be Gay, too. (Her answer during a radio interview was noncommittal enough to leave room for "clarifications" later.) Big yawn. You know what would be news? It would be news to learn that a well-known pop star called People magazine to say "I'm Gay!" and People responded with a "So what?" I long for the day when a star's coming out is not worthy of magazine space, much less a cover story.

We have not yet reached that day.

Clay Aiken's coming out was about as surprising as Elton John's, only less courageous. (Remember that John came out 20 years ago, at the height of the AIDS crisis, when Gay sex was still illegal in many parts of this country.) For years, certain bloggers have referred to Aiken as "Gayken," a practice as lazy as it is childish. An online poll revealed that 96 percent of respondents were not surprised by his announcement.

The other 4 percent, presumably, also insist that Liberace was merely "artistic."

I certainly don't mean to criticize Aiken for his honesty, and I can't blame him for wanting to capitalize on it with a cover story. I have no idea what People paid him for the scoop, if anything, but I suspect he got more than I did when I came out in an op-ed in my college paper. (I think they gave me a coupon for a free pizza.)

Incidentally, that was in 1989, a year after Elton John came out as Gay. It was harder then, no doubt because so few public figures had done it.

Aiken's coming out adds to that growing list of public figures, and for that we should be thankful. There are interesting dimensions to his story, including his identifying as a born-again Christian and his generally wholesome image. (My late grandmother, like many grandmothers, adored him on American Idol.)

Some might hope that his revelation will reach a demographic not otherwise friendly to Gay issues, reminding them that we truly are everywhere. I'm skeptical. Aiken just had a child out of wedlock, via artificial insemination, with a much older female friend. His fellow born-again Christians will likely see him less as a role-model than as a cautionary tale.

So if progressives shrug and traditionalists scold, what can Aiken's coming out teach us? Two things, I think.

First, that if you're going to use the "My sexual orientation is private and none of your business" line, as Aiken did repeatedly, then don't be surprised if few care when you announce your Gayness on the cover of People.

Aiken is hardly alone in exploiting the ambiguity of the claim that sexual orientation is "private." Private in the sense of being deeply personal and deserving of non-interference? Absolutely. Private in the sense of being secret? Only if you insist on making it so.

That was Aiken's right, of course. But it was also our right to notice his doing it. It was not our right to nag him about it–he was young, and still figuring it all out–but it was our right to refuse to go along with treating Gayness as somehow unspeakable. Aiken's story underscores how the convention of the closet is crumbling. This is progress.

The second thing his coming out teaches us is that while simple honesty is good, it is no longer enough. It may be enough (for now) to get you on the cover of People, but it's not enough, I'll wager, to get readers rushing to the newsstands.

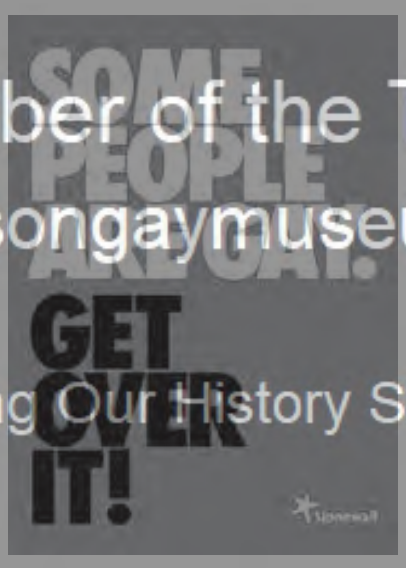
I'm surprised, frankly, that it's still enough to get you on the cover of People–even if you are the most famous American Idol runner-up ever (my grandmother went to her grave insisting that Ruben had robbed him of the rightful title) and you have a cute baby in an unconventional family arrangement. I don't expect People to be The Economist, but I do expect something fresher and more stimulating than "Yes, I'm Gay."

And so let me close with a plea to our LGBT organizations. For the love of Jehovah, don't invite Aiken to headline fundraising dinners or pride events unless and until he actually does something more to advance Gay rights.

"Yes, I'm Gay" may be enough to impress People. It should no longer be enough to impress us.

And that, too, is progress.

(John Corvino, Ph.D. is an author, speaker, and philosophy professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. For over 15 years he has traveled the country speaking on homosexuality and ethics. His writing has been featured in regional and national periodicals, at the online Independent Gay Forum , and in numerous scholarly anthologies. His column "The Gay Moralist" appears on 365Gay.com, from which this is reprinted. For more about John Corvino, or to see clips from his "What's Morally Wrong with Homosexuality?" DVD, visit johncorvino.com.)



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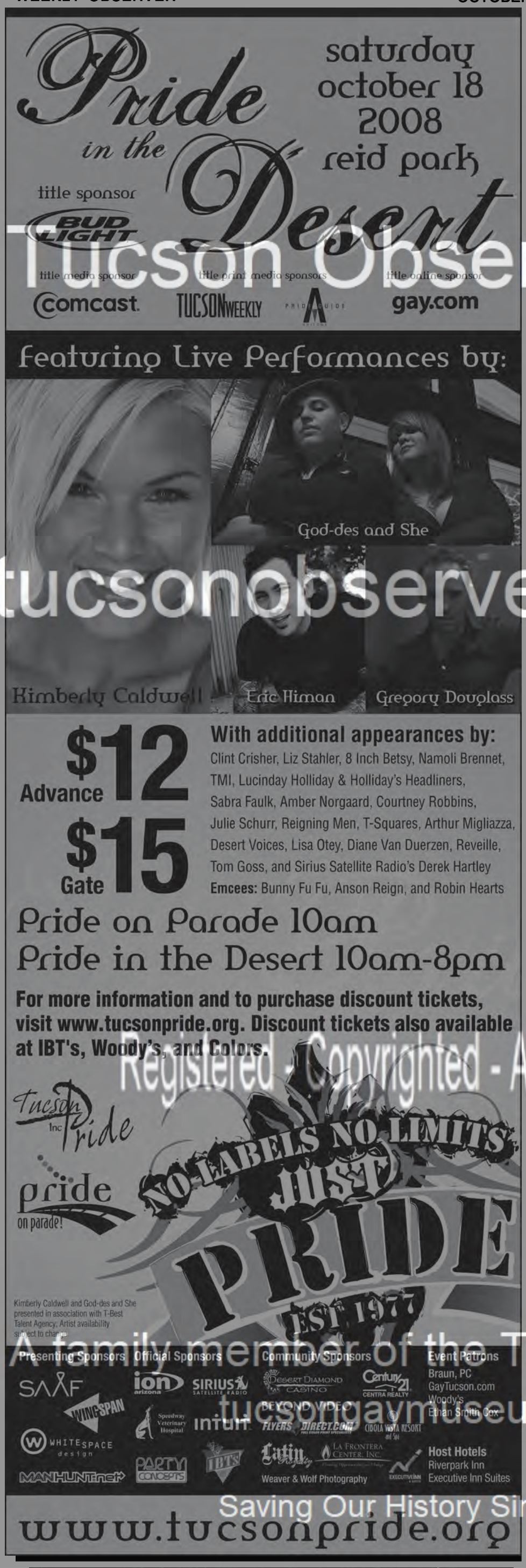

TELL OUR ADVERTISERS
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POLITICS 2008

by Mark R. Kerr

She Votes For Me

This individual first ran for political office, in 2000, for the Arizona House of Representatives for then Legislative District 13 which covered Eastern, Central Tucson North to the Catalina Mountains, a political rarity had occurred with the state Senate seat, as well as both seats in the state Houses of Representatives were open, resulting in a free-for-all on the local level for the three posts.

When contacting these individuals to see where they stood on issues of concern to Tucson's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community, one candidate stood out, actually knowing the two bills before the Arizona Legislature during the session pertaining to HIV/AIDS testing and protecting the rights of LGBT people in the workplace, they knew the bill number, sponsors and stated their position on both, citing information, studies as well as the attempts to enact legislation on the federal level.

Elected to the Arizona House of Representatives in 2000 and elected to the Arizona Senate in 2002, serving the constituents and people across the state with their knowledge and caring for the betterment of everyone's lives.

Not paying just "lip service," but taking stances and action (through sponsorship or co-sponsorship of legislation) when needed, especially for the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities:

From protecting the rights and privacy of those wishing to be tested for HIV;

Ensuring funding for Arizona's AIDS Service Organizations;

Attempting to ensure that medically accurate information is given on HIV/AIDS in the state's public education system, allowing governmental entities to provide medical and dental benefits to the domestic partners (same or opposite sex) and their families;

Creating a real, right-to-work state, in which all Arizonan's, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, perceived or otherwise, could earn a living without fear of losing their job because of whom they are;

Expanding the state's bias crime's law to cover misdemeanors and preventing the scape-goating for political profit of Arizona's LGBT community by the Republican majority on worthless "postcards,"

During the initial run for federal office, this individual stood with the community by opposing Proposition 107 in 2006, which would have barred governmental and legal recognition of committed same-sex relationships (and families), defeated by the voters in the November general election that year.

Gabrielle Giffords stood with Arizona's LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities, one of the few who did while serving in Arizona's Legislature and it is time to stand with Giffords again during this election year.

Her Republican opponent is Tim Bee, the current state Senate President whose actions and votes placed Proposition 102, the measure to bar governmental and legal recognition of committed, same-sex relationships (and families) on this year's general election ballot. Bee is no friend to the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities and wants to use Proposition 102 as his "wedge issue" to victory, despite state statutes and court precedent.

On the other hand, Gabrielle Giffords has publicly opposed Proposition 102 and has taken action through statements, actions and votes to improve the quality of life of all people, LGBT, straight or otherwise, living in Congressional District 8

For more information about the Giffords campaign, headquarters at 4444 East Grant, to volunteer, call (520) 512-0012, or go online to giffordsforcongress.com.

Unlike Bee's misleading and misogynistic ads, voters in Congressional District 8 can return an individual to office who serves everyone, not a select few. Giffords casts her votes for everyone, something this reporter and constituent can take pride in.

Pastors Endorse Candidates In Violation Of Federal Law

WEST BEND, Wisconsin (Observer Update) - Pastor Luke Emrich prepared his sermon this week knowing his remarks could invite an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service. But that was the whole point, so Emrich forged ahead with his message: Thou shalt vote according to the Scriptures, 365Gay.com reported.

"I'm telling you straight up, I would choose life," Emrich told about 100 worshippers Sunday (September 28) at New Life Church, a nondenominational evangelical congregation about 40 miles from Milwaukee. "I would cast a vote for John McCain and Sarah Palin," he said. "But friends, it's your choice to make, it's not my choice. I won't be in the voting booth with you."

All told, 33 pastors in 22 states were to make pointed recommendations about political candidates Sunday, an effort orchestrated by the Arizona-based Alliance Defense Fund. The conservative legal group plans to send copies of the pastors' sermons to the IRS with hope of setting off a legal fight and abolishing restrictions on church involvement in politics. Critics call it unnecessary, divisive and unlikely to succeed.

Congress amended the tax code in 1954 to state that certain nonprofit groups, including secular charities and places of worship, can lose their tax-exempt status for intervening in a campaign involving candidates.

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COMMENTARY. . . .

by Jason Cianciotto

Reflections On Wingspan's 11th Annual Benefit Dinner

"Best dinner yet!" When I came in to the office on Monday (September 22), I was so grateful to read that note among the extremely positive feedback I've received from attendees at this year's annual benefit dinner and celebration of Wingspan's 20th anniversary.

Jason Cianciotto

It was quite a celebration - good friends, good food, inspirational award recipients, and moving videos and speeches. We looked back on Wingspan's incredible 20-year history, and we came together to move forward, hand-in-hand, into the future.

The evening began with a pre-dinner reception featuring hors d'oeuvres, time to catch up with old and new friends, and a silent auction that included over 100 items, from gift certificates at favorite Tucson restaurants to an authentic Chagall print.

As I wandered through the TCC Galleria and Grand Hallway greeting everyone and thanking them for their support, my heart and spirit was lifted by the energy, excitement, and diversity around me - LGBT and straight ally, young and old, Native and Latino/a, Black, white, Asian and everything in between - celebrating our lives, our loves, our friendships, and our families.

At about 6:45 p.m., the Batucaxé Samba band led everyone into the ballroom, marching to the celebratory beat of bells and drums. I sat down at my table, thanked keynote speaker Judy Shepard who was sitting next to me, and the program started by honoring Mary Ellen Beaurain with the Community Ally Award for her incredible work to help create Wingspan's Senior Programs.

Next was a moving video created by interim program director Liz Burden, chronicling Wingspan's 20 years of service to our community. I invite you to watch that video below.

We also presented videos created by Angela Soto to honor our award recipients. These videos as well as a clip of my speech will be avilable shortly on our YouTube page: youtube.com/wingspanaz.

During dinner, I visited as many tables as I could to say hello and thank everyone for their support and commitment to Wingspan's mission of promoting the freedom, equality, safety and well-being of our community. The lights dimmed, and we honored Steve Hall Award winners Shirley Snow and AngieRose Tilghman. Each have been volunteers for over nine years, serving not only at Wingspan's front desk, but also on a variety of program committees.

Sam Holdren, political director at Equality Arizona, assisted board president Carol Lohman in thanking the over 30 elected officials, candidates and other honored guests who came to show their support for our community.

Afterward, Nick Ray, our director of development, came on stage to announce an incredible gift and surprise.

Judy Dlugacz, founder of Olivia Cruises, was in attendance as part of celebrating the opening of the first and only Olivia Community, right here in Tucson. She was so moved by her experience in Tucson and with Wingspan, that she donated a luxury cruise package to the Eastern Caribbean for us to offer as a live auction item. I watched in amazement as Nick and Tucson's Black Cat, Ajia Simone, started a bidding war that raised an additional $10,000 for Wingspan!

After the crowd settled down from the auction, we celebrated the lifetime of service and commitment to our community in Southern Arizona of Godat Award Recipient Noel Matkin, who, among other accomplishments, was instrumental in the creation of Tucson's domestic partnership registry when he was co-chair of the City of Tucson LGBT commission.

University of Arizona Pride Alliance director Justin Howes introduced Keynote speaker Judy Shepard. Her speech was preceded by a video that told the parallel stories of how the hate-motivated murders of her son Matthew and of James Byrd Jr. in Texas forced communities around the country to organize for and demand the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in hate crimes legislation.

Judy also urged us to not become complacent despite our country's slow but steady movement towards equality. She ended her remarks by reminding us that it is local communities, through organizations like Wingspan, that have the power to truly impact people's lives on a daily basis. Our standing ovation reminded Judy that we will never forget her son or the incredible work she and her husband support through the Matthew Shepard Foundation.

Our celebration ended with a dessert reception in the TCC Galleria, where guests were able to mingle with each other while enjoying a selection of 15 delectable desserts. Batucaxé also entertained with more Samba music, and many took the opportunity to create their own dance floor in the lobby.

I left the TCC around 10:15pm, happily exhausted. Just as this year's dinner was our most successful to-date thanks to the hard work of our incredible dinner committee volunteers and development staff, Wingspan's growth and success over the past 20 years has been and always will be dependent on you.

As I said in my speech, this incredible evening was not just a celebration of Wingspan, it was a celebration of you, because through your time, love, volunteerism, and financial support, you make our work possible.

This is your community and Wingspan will always be your center. I'm so excited and grateful to be a part of working with you at the start of our next 20 years.

(Jason Cianciotto is the Executive Director of Wingspan.)

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'Out In Hollywood': Starring Roles Are Rare

LOS ANGELES, California - There's a Bisexual woman in "Bones" and a Lesbian couple on "The Goode Family." "Dirty Sexy Money" features a transsexual and "Brothers & Sisters" a Gay marriage. In "Mad Men," the Emmy-winning drama set in the early '60s, there's Salvatore Romano, a self-loathing homosexual who marries a woman but pines for a male co-worker, reported the New York Times.

Never before have Gay story lines been so prominent. Nor have there ever been so many Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender characters on television – 83 by a recent count from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, not counting reality shows, daytime dramas or Gay-oriented cable networks.

Hollywood, with its depictions of cowboy lovers and Lesbian neighbors, has done much to make Gay men and women part of mainstream American life. At the same time, Gay actors like Neil Patrick Harris and T. R. Knight play heterosexual characters on TV and in film, while couples – Ellen DeGeneres and Portia de Rossi – are covered by celebrity magazines as if they were any old romance.

"We've gone from the revolution to the evolution," said Howard Bragman, a longtime Hollywood publicist who is Gay and has advised actors like Amanda Bearse, of "Married ... With Children" and Dick Sargent of "Bewitched" on how to handle their coming out.

Yet for most Gay actors, Hollywood is not a warm and fuzzy episode of "Will & Grace." Today, it is certainly more acceptable to be openly Gay. But these actors must still answer wrenching questions: Just how candid do you want to be? Would you be happy appearing only in comedies, or being pigeonholed as a character actor? And what does the line "You're just not right for the role" really mean?

Jasika Nicole, 28, an F.B.I. agent on "Fringe," a new Fox drama, said that as bigger parts became available, her manager, John Essay, sat her down and asked how public she wanted to be about being a Lesbian. Some roles could be lost, he told her, as would some fans. Mr. Essay, who is Gay, said he encouraged openness but warned clients of the risks. "If it becomes exaggerated," he said, "you just become the Gay actress instead of a wonderful actress." Perhaps, he suggested, she didn't want to be too vocal about it.

Ms. Nicole, who has a girlfriend, said she would just be herself. She has been open about her sexual orientation since she started dating women about 3 ½ years ago, while she was filming "Take the Lead" with Antonio Banderas in Toronto. Now, as she becomes better known, "There's no way I can keep quiet," she said. "I want to be clear this is my partner. I don't want to make that shameful in any kind of way."

But most other actors calibrate just how out they want to be. Openly Gay can still mean they would rather not talk about it. Most Gay actors are mum in public or on the set, even if they don't hide their orientation in private, actors and others in the entertainment industry said. Although most may no longer participate in charades – the "girlfriend" on the red carpet, for instance – many adopt a don't ask, don't tell policy.

Why? For both men and women, being openly Gay, at least for now, means giving up any hope of superstardom. "The industry is persuaded that being known as Gay will undermine your credibility both as romantic lead or an action star," said Larry Gross, director of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California and author of a book on media portrayals of Gays and Lesbians. "They don't test it," he said. "We're waiting for the Jackie Robinson moment when someone tests that assumption and discovers it's not true."

Gay actors don't just lose the potential of becoming the next Brad Pitt or Reese Witherspoon, they lose the opportunities for fame that ensure plum jobs, said Jason Stuart, an actor and comedian who chairs the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender committee of the Screen Actors Guild. It is no coincidence, he said, that even the title role in "Milk," based on the slain Gay hero, Harvey Milk, went to Sean Penn, an Oscar-winning actor who is straight. "There are not enough famous Gay actors to play these roles," he said.

Dan Jinks, a producer of "Milk," agreed. The film's director, writer and two producers are openly Gay and so are a number of actors who play Gay and straight roles, including the Tony Award-winners Denis O'Hare and Stephen Spinella. But for the lead, Mr. Jinks said, "Our first concern was to get the best actor that we could get who was enough of a movie star to get the movie made."

"When one is casting a film for a lead role we always have to ask that awful question: 'Who puts bodies in seats?' " Mr. Jinks said. "Who has carried movies previously? Sadly, there don't seem to be openly Gay actors that could carry a movie, but I think that will change.' "

When they don't land a part, some Gay actors say they never know how much of a factor their homosexuality plays. "There are definitely people who make the decisions who don't care and there are people who do care," said Abraham Higginbotham, creator of the Fox sitcom "Do Not Disturb." The actor up for the part, he said, "would hear, 'You're not right for the role.' "

But some casting directors said it was now much easier to cast Gays. Mary Jo Slater, a film and television casting director, said barriers were falling because of the success of shows with openly Gay actors in them. Ms. Slater cast a Transgender actress, Candis Cayne, in "Dirty Sexy Money," and noted: "She's, like, a big star now." "I look at their ability to perform the part," she said. "I don't really think it matters."

But what about straight parts? Chad Allen, 34, a child actor on shows like "St. Elsewhere" and "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman," said steady work dried up in 1996 after a tabloid ran a photograph showing him kissing another man. The "Dr. Quinn" cast was supportive and he remained in the family-oriented show, he said, but after the series ended, "It was tough." "I couldn't get an audition for a pilot after that," he said.

But Mr. Allen, who attended college and continued to do some work in film, found new roles a few years ago, with the advent of Gay-oriented cable networks. In channels like Here! and Viacom's Logo, openly Gay actors have played lead roles as private detectives, vampires and superheroes. Mr. Allen stars in a mystery series on Here!, in a role he describes as "a good detective who happens to be Gay."

And in a sign of the times, the show gave him opportunities for Gay and heterosexual guest roles in television shows like "C.S.I.: Miami" and "Cold Case." In 2006, Mr. Allen incurred the wrath of some conservative ministers after he was cast as the lead in "End of the Spear," produced by an evangelical film company, about five American missionaries killed in 1956 by an indigenous tribe in Ecuador. The church pastors objected to his sexual orientation and his political advocacy for Gay causes, but Mr. Allen said the fear of casting someone like him is less and less an issue. "We've been witnessing a slow erosion of this fear as audiences show up," he said.

One test of how far things have progressed, some industry analysts said, will be the kind of roles Mr. Harris and Mr. Knight are offered once they end their current hit shows. Although they are openly Gay, they landed the parts before they came out. And tellingly, they made statements about their sexuality only after being outed by bloggers in the case of Mr. Harris, and by a homophobic incident with a co-star in the case of Mr. Knight. For now, more Gay characters and better scripts are adding up to more fulfilling work. It wasn't too long ago that actors like Bryan Batt of "Mad Men" could find good parts only on the stage. Even in theater, he said, his agent was once told by a casting director, "I just can't see Bryan as a baseball player."

"I didn't know what to make of that," said Mr. Batt, 45, who came out publicly in the mid-90s when he landed the part of Darius in "Jeffrey," the off-Broadway play about sex and romance in the age of AIDS. As an actor, Mr. Batt said, he doesn't want to be pigeonholed into playing only Gay roles, but it's hard not to feel "proud and happy" with Salvatore. He begged Matthew Weiner, the show's creator, to let the character get married. "It's a realm of reality that television had not really explored," he said. The character is addled by the kind of inner conflict – not able to be himself, forced to act like the sexist guys in the office – that "continues to happen," and not just in 1960s period dramas, Mr. Batt noted. That such a meaty part went to an openly Gay actor "speaks volumes about how far we've come."

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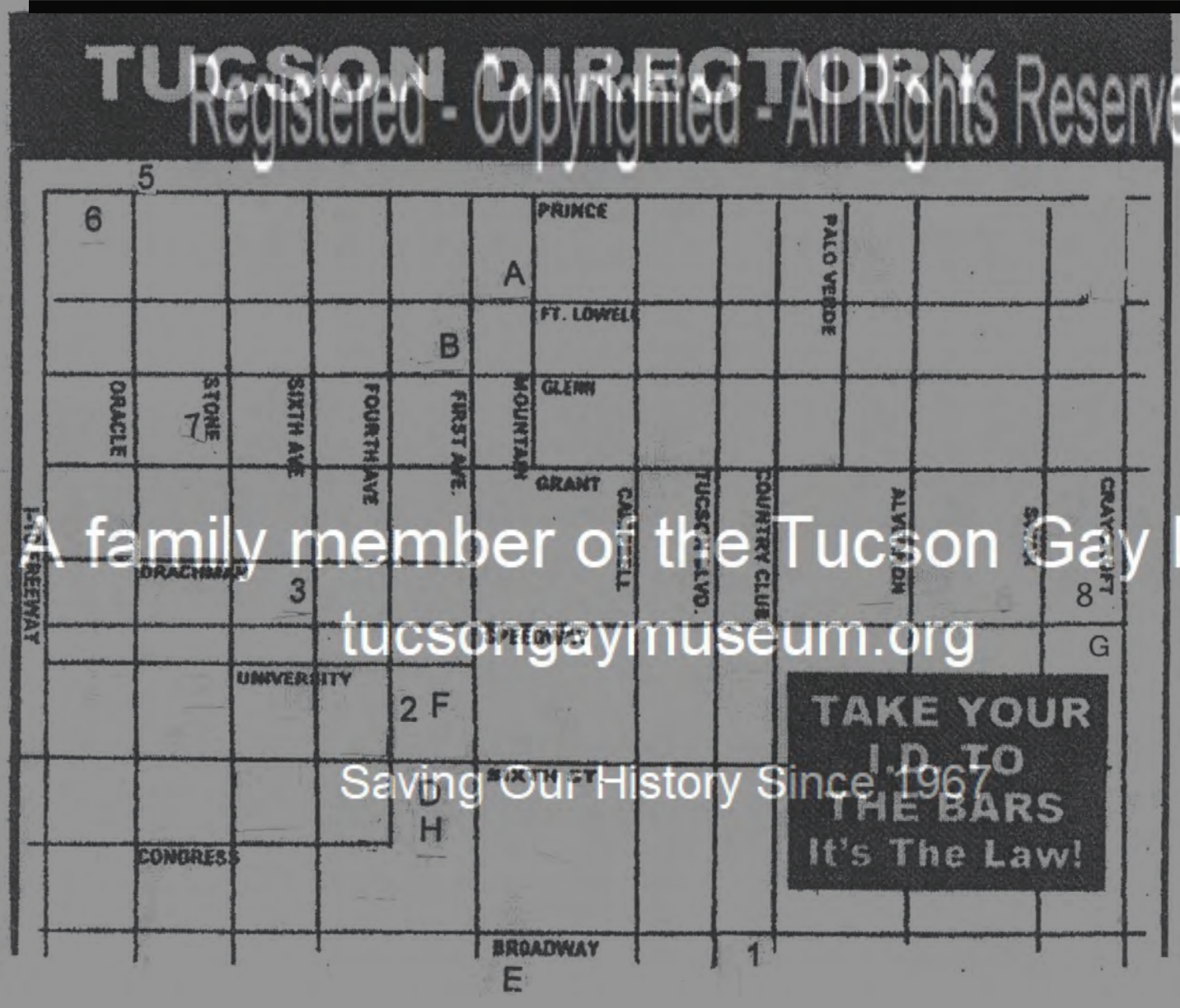

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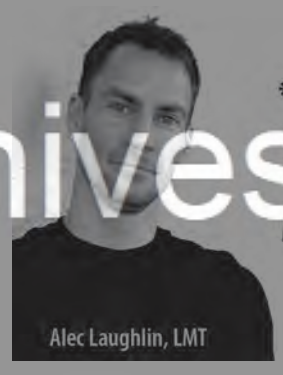

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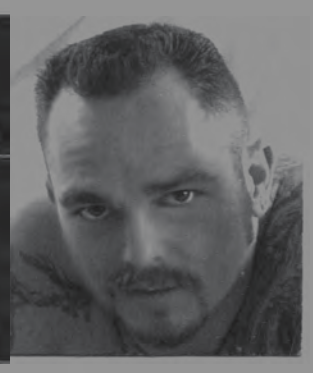

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Fueled By Petrol

by Jimmy Petrol

Pundits Ponder Pupil's Poor Performance

i

"Bad" Science. AIMS test scores reveal that only about one-third of Arizona high-school grads show "proficiency" in science upon graduation. Remember, this is proficiency at the high-school level; hardly rocket science.

Pundits, pondering this without the aid of a personal proficiency in science....that is to say without a clue as to the scientific investigative process, blame teachers, curriculum and the like; I can see them scratching their heads in bewilderment as they watch Fox news, listen to Rush Limpbergher and attend regular sermons at the church of choice.

The reasons for American scientific ignorance are societal, not a problem with schools or teachers.

We, as a nation, currently are seriously entertaining the notion of electing a female to the office of Vice President who does not "believe" in evolution.

We, as a nation, have supported the caprices of a dunce acting as puppet president, whose claim to understanding of the scientific method is to cast doubt on un-Bushly research by simply calling it "bad science". It has worked well enough; who wants to be fooled by "bad science"?

We, as a nation, support the idea that religious ideas have "scientific" merit... which proves unequivocally that we do not have the slightest idea what "science" is and even that we do not own dictionaries.

To wit: "science" is simply the intellectual investigation of various ideas and phenomena, using the "scientific method", which is a set of rules "scientists" are supposed to use to analyze information/data and come up with probable, reasonable theories. Religion, to contrast, is based on something called "blind faith" and cannot be confused with science by intelligent beings.

Simple. You can Google "scientific method" and get the whole scoop; I will not try to make this into Science 101.

But the point is simple: Americans have been told that science can be "bad" by people who wish to make things harder to figure out than they are. These people have objected to the very idea of an investigative process with rules, loudly demanding that emotion and personal belief be treated as "science". These people want to govern our country according to the dictates of "religious" beliefs....something the constitution was designed to prohibit.

No wonder that the high-school grads have no proficiency in science. Lots of them have parents that demand intellectual subjugation to religious doctrine. Some watch Fox news, where-in the government hotly denies the very existence of the scientific method, choosing to over-complicate any policy which is insupportable when subjected to investigations performed using the rules and conventions of science.

For us, it is important to remember that the reason Jill and Johnny can't cipher is because they don't have to; in a world where personal religious beliefs can trump science, nobody has to bother giving thought to scientific investigation; we need only to pray for the will of God to be revealed to us. Of course, since we never hear back ourselves, we have to rely on our spiritual leaders to let us in on the will of God, when they can spare the time away from altar boys, hookers and personal audiences with Himself.

So What?

The time of American technical security is ending. When people like G.W. Bush, Sarah ("Twinkie") Palin and the like get to run the country, withou the intellect to distinguish between science and religion, long-term and short-term benefit or even good and bad, the American I.Q. goes down.

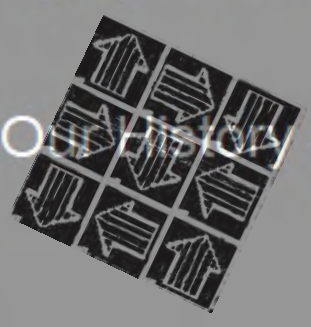
Generally speaking, of course, money makes world policy everywhere and it is of little matter who is president, king or queen.

There are times, though, when allowing a particular party to govern, when it is a party that believes in torture, war, the subjugation of women, demonization of sexual minorities, lies of convenience and so on, that it is too dangerous for us as a people to allow it to continue to govern.

For the first time in the Petrol experience, it is time to care about the vote.

It is imperative that the constitutional erosion be stopped. We stand at a turning point. We must make a decision. It will not "all be ok" unless the constitution is re-instated and the people that have turned American government into a personal financial instrument be sent away.

We must not listen to the people who brought us to this pass when they tell us that we need them in power to be safe. We are not safe. The cost of American moral, financial and technical recovery cannot be made light, but it can perhaps still be made if we move away from lies, torture and profiteering.



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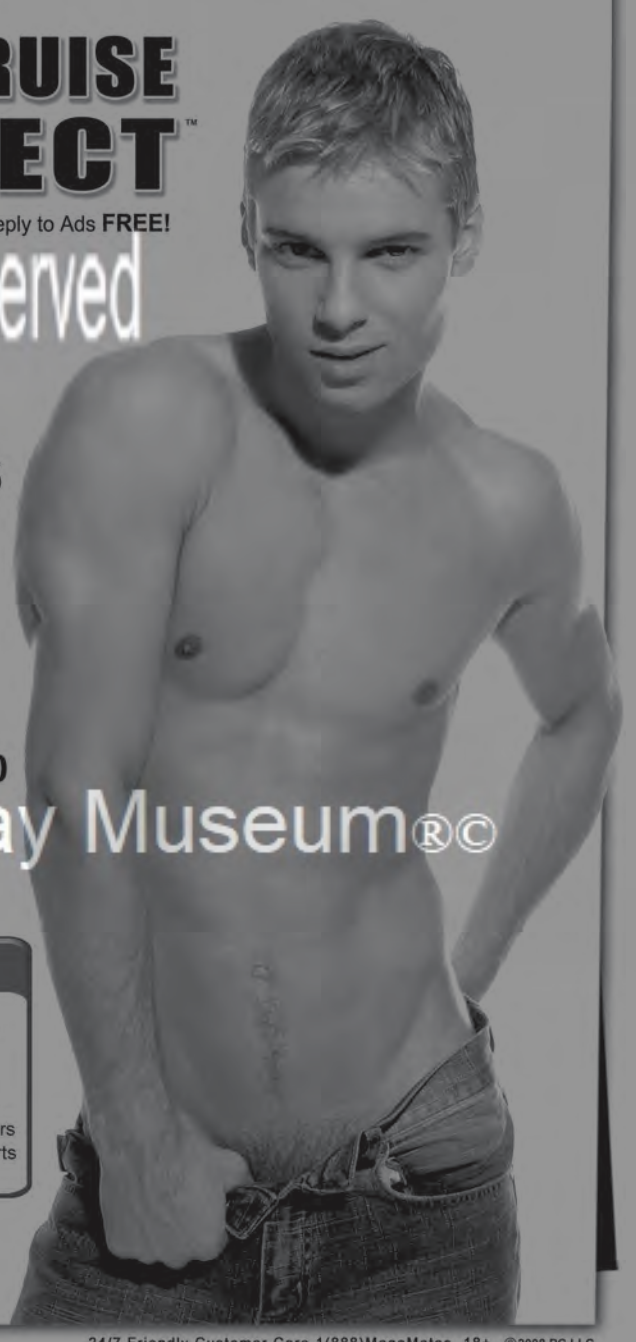

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Get ready for National Coming Out Month! October is no time to sit and wait for the world to knock. Saturn, the planet of life lessons, opposes explosive retro Uranus. Anything and everything can happen now. 'Bout time!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Even though you may feel like a mangy rat on an ever increasing treadmill, it is time to jump off and make life happen. October is here with its no compromising energies. Follow your gut and make dramatic changes. Of course it might be a good idea to look before you leap. Consider all options first so we won't have to peel you off the sidewalk with a spatula later.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

It's been hard to manage expectations and do the organizing when everyone else is partying down. October now brings the realization that life doesn't have to be serious. Light hearted things don't need a payoff. Sometimes just "being" is reward enough. So see and be seen in all the right circles. And if you find a few squares in the bunch, you might just round them out.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Pink Twins have been schlepping themselves from home to work and back again for so long that they can no longer see the difference between the two. This has got to stop. It is the time to find the right balance in all the areas of your life. You may be surprised at how easy it is to relegate something on to the bottom shelf and feel free and calm. No not home!

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

If you have found yourself apologizing frequently because of unintentional verbal gaffs, this is the month to step back and listen to yourself. Try to assess how you are communicating to others. You may just find that with a small tweak here and there you can command the masses and foment revolution. This may not be a bad thing, unless you prefer the quiet life. Then shhh.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

How much are you willing to spend to get what you really want now? Proud Lions were particularly careful with their loot but now they can be tempted by a gaudy, useless bauble or two. Heck, life is too short to scrimp all the time. Sometimes you have to let loose and splurge. Be sure that it has a large payoff at the end instead of a large payout in the beginning.

VIRGO

(AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

Your general lack of self confidence will come in for a full reappraisal over the next four weeks. Sure, there is a time and place to let your ego inflate but what is the time and where is the place? Thankfully partners and those with whom you share a close relationship show you how wonderful you are. Bottle it and sip from it during the dry season.

LIBRA

(SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

Proud Libras can not only discern friend from foe in the workplace, they can now maneuver between the senior and staff levels gracefully. How can you harness this power effectively? Truthfully you won't quite know. But you will learn what motivates each side. Use this in future negotiations and upheavals. Your cream will rise before it curdles.

SCORPIO

(OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

You are running in a serious crowd, queer Scorp. Are you sure they really know how to let loose and have a good time? The next month will test many of your platonic relationships. Do they give you everything you need? If not, attempt to make them better and or even seek new ones. Surprises are in store if you make yourself open and available. So what's new?

SAGITTARIUS

(NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

If you have had trouble tamping down on stray corporate rumors, this is the time when you can better manage it. Not only are you full of surprises that can engage and impress the elite, you can also shift your attention and reprioritize quickly. This will make you very valuable in certain circles and somewhat scattered in others. Circle wisely.

CAPRICORN

(DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Pink Caps might have avoided extensive travel but October offers you the chance to experience some new and very interesting far afield things. How much courage do you possess? The world will not only seem vast, it will also seem chaotic. There are times to embrace change and see what the fates deliver. Don't sit at home and wait for the delivery.

AQUARIUS

(JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

There is something sultry and sexy about you now, Aqueerius. You appear to be on fire. Could be just be a mask that hides your lack of self-confidence? Whatever works. Before you know it your facade falls away and you deal with your fears directly. The great benefit to this is that you will have your choice of admirers and even a benefactor. Choose the latter!

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

Relationships can reach a turning point and this will be seen as a relief to you no matter which direction it goes after that. Guppies love having a certain someone. It is wonderful when that person deserves your love and attention. Use this time to craft the relationship that you deserve rather than the one you think you want. Yes there is a difference.

NM School Takes Over Pubs Following Lesbian Photo

CLOVIS, NM (Observer Update) - Some educators in Clovis, New Mexico, seriously lack backbone, reported queerty.com.

The area's main high school came under fire four months ago after the student-run yearbook, the Plainsman, included pictures of a Lesbian duo in a round up of the campus' cutest couple. Buckling under pressure from angry locals - or is it yokels? - the school board has decided to take complete control of the district's student-driven publications:

The board voted 3-2 to pass the new publications code. The code also gives school principals authority to review students' work before publication. Clovis Municipal School District Superintendent Rhonda Seidenwurm said the school district's previous publications code did not allow principals to review student publications. Under the code, students can appeal a decision regarding content. The board of education will have the final say in the appeals process. Oh, that's promising!

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got pride?

Pepsico Foundation Grants $500,000 To PFLAG

NEW YORK CITY (Observer Update) - In a move that may upset conservative organizations and leaders, the PepsiCo Foundation has given a grant of $500,000 to Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) to support Straight for Equality, a national education campaign, and to fund training and chapter support.

PFLAG is a national organization made up of chapters of parents of members of the LGBT community. Chapters serve multiple roles, including support for parents who have recently learned a child is Gay, community education, and engaging parents and friends in the struggle for LGBT equality. "PepsiCo has provided PFLAG with an enormous gift, and an unparalleled opportunity, to demonstrate the power we have to create change, no matter where we are, or who we are," PFLAG executive director Jody M. Huckaby said in a statement released earlier today. "Because of the Foundation's generosity and commitment, we now have the resources to produce materials for our chapters to use in their communities, and to create critically important conversations, in every corner of our country."

"We are delighted to continue our partnership with PFLAG," Jacqueline Millan, Director of PepsiCo Corporate Contributions, said in the same statement. "The Straight for Equality in the Workplace training program is unique in that it is promoting the necessary message of inclusion to untapped groups within the local community, and that is a crucial step towards building a healthy working environment."

Palm Beach Increases Domestic Partner Benefits

PALM BEACH, Florida (Observer Update) - The Palm Beach County School District has agreed to insure the children of its employees' domestic partners. As Floridians prepare to decide on Amendment 2 – an initiative that could constitutionally ban same-sex marriage in the state – on November 4, Palm Beach made a bold statement of Gay tolerance by offering increased domestic-partner benefits.

"The School Board's pro-family policy of insuring the children of domestic partners could not have come at a better time," said Rand Hoch, president of the Palm Beach County Human Rights Council, in a release. "In these uncertain economic times, all families need access to affordable health insurance."

The Palm Beach school board last year adjusted its health insurance rates to allow employees with domestic partners to pay the same premiums as married partners, reported advocate.com.

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NON-BAR CALENDAR

Wednesday, October 1st
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m. Hand and Foot with Marv at 745-0304.

Tucson Prime Timers invites you to join them for a 1:00 pm. Luncheon at Claim Jumper Restaurant, 3761 E, Broadway - RSVP John or Ed at 298-6727 or on website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

Thursday, October 2nd
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00p.m.
Triangle Tribe-A Men's Circle. According to a recent study, very few people have as many close friends as they would like. Are you as connected with other men as you want to be? Do you get the support you need for issues in your life? Do you wish you had more meaningful friendships and relationships with other men? Join like-minded men at Wingspan to share feelings, thoughts and ideas in a safe, respectful space. For the same experience with both straight and gay men, join us at the regular Circle of Men meetings. Call Tom at 591-2828 for dates and times.

Tucson Prime Timers invites you to join them for bowling at 1:30 p.m. at Golden Pin Lanes, 1010West Miracle Mile.

Friday, October 3rd
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.

Tucson Prime Timers invites you to join them for dinner at Delectables Restaurant, 533 N. 4th Avenue. RSVP Clem at 885-1270 or on website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

Saturday October 4th
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 an Octoberfest theme. So bring a friend and enjoy the harvest season while enjoying a great meal with your friends at MSN.

Tucson Prime Timers invites you to joion them for Drinks & Grub, 6:30 p.m. at Woody's Bar, 3710 N. Oracle Rd.

Sunday October 5th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 6:30p.m. Dinner Out at Romano's Macaroni Grill. For reservations and directions, contact Thom 908-6160, e-mail thomsepals@hotmail.com .

Tucson Prime Timers invites you to join them for Sunday Brunch at 1:00 p.m. at Ghini's Café, 1803 E. Prince Road. RSVP Dennis at 883-8257 or on website: www.tucsonprimetimers.org

Monday, October 6th
Men's Social Network Open to men of all ages, newcomers welcomed: 7:00 p.m. Lee and 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!

#1 -Tucson Prime Timers invites you to join them for Bowling at 10:30 a.m. at Golden Pin Lanes, 1010 West Miracle Mile.
#2 - Tucson Prime Timers invites you to their weekly drop-in luncheon, 12:30 p.m. at Wildcat House, 1801 N. Stone Ave.

Tuesday October 7th
Men's Social Network. Open to men of all ages. Gay Reading Group 7:00pm. Call Doug At 529-0014 for location and directions.
Tucson Prime Timers invites you to join them for a 1:00 p.m. luncheon at La Cocina, 201 N. Court Avenue. RSVP John or Ed at 298-6727

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NOTICES - COMMUNITY - NOTICES

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

TUCSON KNIGHT OWLS (T.K.O)
We are a non profit social club that is open to every one. T.K.O. contributes to the fellowship and support of the community, and openly invites new members and/or guests. Monthly meetings occur on the first Saturday of every month at 11:00 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 520 742-1271. 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 committed volunteers to provide services including friendly visits, light housekeeping, assistance with meals, shopping, errands, transportation and companionship for medical appointments, and respite care for primary care givers. No judgement or proselytizing - we are here to be of service. For information call Scott at 299-6647.

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

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

TUCSON PRIDE, INC. (Formerly Tucson Lesbian and Gay Alliance - TLGA) meets on the second Wednesday at 845 S. Craycroft Road at 6pm. Tucson Pride events: Pride Week, Gay West and OUTtoberFEST. 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,

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.:

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DAILY BAR CALENDAR

SUNDAY

THE BIZ - Visit the outdoor patio enjoy a cocktail or two. Sports on all day!!! You call it!! NFL $5 Beer and Burgers 10am - 3pm 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; $2.25 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 with ID or payroll receipt.

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

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am. Peter's Build Your Own Bloody Mary Bar 11am-2pm. Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excluding special events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-8pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar 2pm-2am. Beer Bust 2pm-7pm. Karaoke with Michael D 9pm-Close. Drag Bingo every other Sunday 8-9pm. Check our Ad for Special Events or Parties

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

MONDAY

THE BIZ - Open 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 Domestic, $12 Imports (4 beers to a bucket, for 2 or more people, Some brands excluded). Texas Hold-Em Poker at 6 & 8:30 p.m. No cash involved - Play for points & Prizes

IBT's -Open Noon. Happy Hour Noon-8pm, 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. College Night - 50 cent canned beer!

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 & Dos XX 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-2am. Dart Tournament, 7pm $3 entry fee/Pot Match.

WOODY'S - Open 11am- 2am. Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl spec events). Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 8pm-close, Caribbean Party Night with Woody's own Specialty Mojitos, Caprioskas and Martinis with Tucson's Hottest Bartenders.

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

WEDNESDAY

THE BIZ - Open 3pm-2am. Happy Hour ALL Day til 8pm. Wild Wednesdays. DJ Hill 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-2am. Beer Bust, 8pm-11pm $2.50/Pitcher.

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

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

THURSDAY

THE BIZ - Open 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 - $3.00 Bicardi Rum - all flavors. Karaoke with Kristen and K2 Tunes 8pm.

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-2am..

WOODY'S - Open 11am-2am; Happy Hour 11am-8pm (excl Spec Events); Full Menu Kitchen open 11am-10pm. Back Pocket Patio Bar open 8pm-close. Cheap Party Day **FREE POOL**, $1.00 PBR Longnecks, $2.00 Tecate Longnecks. Techno and Top 40 Dance with DJ Jeff 9pm - close..

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

FRIDAY

THE BIZ - Open 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. $2.75 All Mexican Beers and Dos XX Amber. Free Country 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-2am Patio Bar Open 7pm-2m Cuervo Margaritas $3 ea., 4-8pm.

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

YARD DOG - Open 11am-2am. Beer Bust 3-7pm. Patio Bar Opens 8pm

SATURDAY

THE BIZ - Open 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!!Lesbian Olympics 8pm in our sexy outdoor lounge.

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.

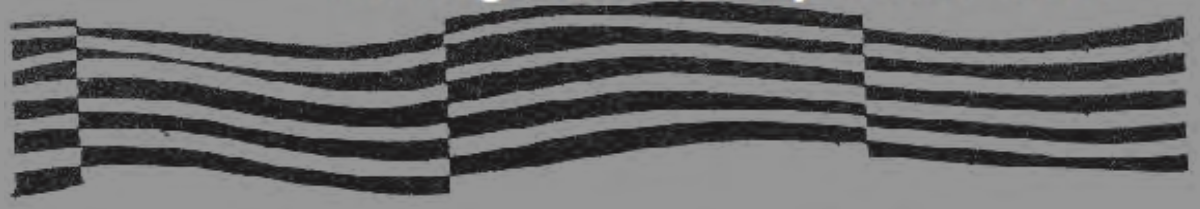
HOWL AT THE MOON - Open at 2pm. Happy Hour 2-8pm, $2.50 well, domestic longnecks & pints. $3.50 sm. Pitcher/$5.50 lg. Plus check out the bartenders choice of shot specials. $5.00 cheeseburger & fries. $3.00 Cuervo and $4.75 Jager Bombs. Check our calendar for the Saturday Night Special Entertainment.

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 -2am

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

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

YARD DOG - Open 8am-2am. Patio Bar Opens 3pm.



BAR CALENDAR Of Upcoming Events

Friday, October 3
YARD DOG - Karaoke with Troy at 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 4
HOWL AT THE MOON - Seniors' Tea Dance 4 - 8 pm Drink and food specials plus lots of favorite oldies to keep you dancing! This isn't your Momma's Tea Dance!

YARD DOG - Reverse Happy Hour 9am - 2pm with a Dart Tournament at 10 a.m.

Sunday, October 5
HOWL AT THE MOON - "Puttin' On The Hits" Talent Search 8:30 p.m.

YARD DOG - Football and Food with Beth and Drink Specials. Texas Hold-em at 1 p.m. then Steak Night with Rob and Pete at 7 p.m.

Thursday, October 9
THE BIZ - Breast Cancer Awareness and National Coming Out Day - 'Come Out In Pink' sponsored by the Biz and Wingspan Breast Health Project. Karaoke from 9 pm to 2am. $1.00 of every Pink Drink will go to Team Boob Troop in the making strides against Breast Cancer Walk.

Friday, October 10
THE BIZ - 'Happy In Pink!' 1/2 off Happy Hour and Free Food. Visit the Wingspan Breast Resources Table.

PR Expert: Hollywood Celebs Usually Happier After They Come Out

LOS ANGELES, California - "American Idol" singer Clay Aiken tiptoed out of the closet into a world where American Gay and Lesbian celebrities are thriving, but still awaiting the company of an A-list star, reported pageoneq.com. Aiken, 29, confirmed what most people in the music business have long believed when he told People magazine he was Gay in an interview released Wednesday.

The 2003 "Idol" runner-up joined popular television host and comedian Ellen DeGeneres, "Sex and the City" actress Cynthia Nixon, actor Neil Patrick Harris and others who have acknowledged their sexual orientation in recent years. Hollywood has come a long way from the days when stars like Rock Hudson had to keep their sexuality a secret. But coming out can still be risky for a star even if it is no longer a career ender, Hollywood watchers said. Actress Lindsay Lohan and British DJ Samantha Ronson have set tongues wagging for months about their friendship, but so far Lohan has dodged opportunities to clarify it. Lohan did acknowledge in a radio interview this week that the two had been "going out" for "a very long time," but did not provide details.

"Almost everyone who has come out has been happier because of it and in almost every case, it has helped their careers, " said Hollywood public relations expert Howard Bragman. "However the fear is still there – the fear of fans, and of studios. Coming out is easier in the music world and it is generally easier for women than men," said Bragman, founder of the Fifteen Minutes PR agency.

Concerns that openly Gay and Lesbian actors will be turned down for straight romantic screen roles or as action stars are fading, just as the number of Gay characters on TV shows is on the rise. Harris plays a skirt-chaser in the popular sitcom "How I Met Your Mother," and Nixon returned for the "Sex and the City" movie in May after acknowledging a four-year relationship with a woman. A study by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) this week found that the number of Gay and bisexual characters appearing in prime time series on U.S. broadcast TV this fall has more than doubled to 16 compared to a year ago.

In his interview with People magazine, Aiken expressed concern that his mostly female fans might desert him. But former 'N Sync singer Lance Bass, who came out as Gay two years ago, said he doubts that would happen. "I swear. When I came out, I had more female fans," Bass told the celebrity TV show Extra! Still, what Bragman calls "the holy grail" – the day when an A-list male Hollywood star declares himself Gay – is a ways off.

"To have a person who is truly at the top of their game disclose their true sexual orientation – that remains a challenge in this country, because you can still be fired in over 30 U.S states just for being openly Gay or Lesbian," said GLAAD president Neil Giuliano.

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Proposed 'Provider Conscience' Regulation Threatens Public Health

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Observer Update) - A proposal by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to expand federal protections for health care workers' religious beliefs could threaten the care that patients receive, several organizations are arguing. LGBT people are at particular risk if the proposed "provider conscience" regulation goes into effect, the groups assert, because the rule would allow workers, on the basis of their faith convictions, to refuse care to patients, reported advocate.com.

"Existing law already protects workers against religious discrimination," Lambda Legal senior counsel Jennifer C. Pizer said in a statement. "The law requires 'reasonable accommodation' of religious beliefs – and that's a fair approach because religious freedom matters a lot. But the changes that HHS proposes are so broad, vague, and confusing that they risk inviting health workers with antiGay beliefs to refuse treatment and otherwise to discriminate against very vulnerable patients."

Rebecca Fox, director of the National Coalition for LGBT Health, says the proposed regulations will affect more than just Gay people. "HHS's proposed regulations will have a negative impact on health care for the majority of Americans," Fox said in a statement. "In a country where so many people struggle to access quality health care, HHS is creating another barrier. These regulations would be particularly harmful for LGBT Americans, many of whom already struggle to find and afford respectful, good-quality medical care."

"The proposed provider conscience regulation is dangerously vague. It threatens patients' right to receive medically needed and legal care in numerous situations, including providing rape victims with access to birth control," Anne Titus Hilby, spokesperson for the Arizona Attorney General's office commented.

In August, HHS secretary Mike Leavitt unveiled the proposed regulation, saying in a statement that the new rule would allow health care professionals to "practice according to their conscience." He continued, "Doctors and other health care providers should not be forced to choose between good professional standing and violating their conscience. Freedom of expression and action should not be surrendered upon the issuance of a health care degree."

Other critics of the measure include 13 state attorney generals, who argue it will limit access to abortion and birth control for victims of sexual assault. One of which is Arizona's Attorney General, Terry Goddard called upon the Bush administration to withdraw a proposed regulation that he believes would infringe upon patients' rights and states' ability to enact fair and uniform health care policies.

In a letter sent to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Goddard and 12 other state Attorneys General urged the department to withdraw a proposed provider conscience regulation. The rule would require health care facilities to permit care providers to deny service based on personal or moral belief or face revocation of DHHS and other federal funding.

In their letter, the Attorneys General said, "The proposed regulation completely obliterates the rights of patients to legal and medically necessary health care services in favor of a single-minded focus on protecting a health care provider's right to claim a personal moral or religious belief."

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Across The Q Globe

ACTIVISTS SEEK REPEAL OF INDIA'S BRITISH-ERA SODOMY LAW

NEW DELHI, India (Observer Update) - Activists seek the repeal of a decades-old law governing sexual behavior India, operating under colonial-era laws criminalizing homosexuality, appears to be finally joining the debate over allowing privacy in relationships, and with Gays campaigning to decriminalize the issue.

The same-sex community in India has been especially bolstered by speeches by federal health minister Anbumani Ramadoss. At the 17th International Conference on AIDS in Mexico city, Ramaoss said, "Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which criminalizes men who have sex with other men, must go."

"Structural discrimination against those who are vulnerable to HIV such as sex workers and men having sex with men must be removed if our prevention, care and treatment programs are to succeed," he added.

IRANIAN PRESIDENT: OK WE HAVE GAYS BUT HATE ISRAEL

UNITED NATIONS (Observer Update) - Here is some shocking news: There are, in fact, Gays in Iran. This report comes directly from Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who last year famously claimed there are no homosexuals in his country.

Questioned back then about his government's execution of Gays, Ahmadinejad, the Holocaust denier and sworn enemy of Israel, denied homosexualitly even exists in Iran. "We do not have this phenomenon," he declared. This week, Ahmadinejad finally conceded there "might be a few" Gays in his country. Then he went on to blast homosexuality as an "unlikable and foreign act" that is illegal because it "shakes the foundations of society," "robs humanity" and "brings about disease."

The interview took place in a room on the top floor of a midtown hotel where the president and his ample entourage stayed during his visit to the UN General Assembly.

BRAVING TYPHOON, TAIPEI HOLDS MASSIVE PRIDE MARCH

TAIPEI, Taiwan -Taipei has held Asia's largest Gay pride march to demand equal rights for homosexuals, transsexuals and Transgender people. Braving showers brought on by Typhoon Jangmi, an estimated 18,000 people - including representatives from Gay rights groups in foreign countries - marched through the main streets of Taipei.

The marchers displayed a 90-by-4.5-metre rainbow flag - the symbol of the Gay rights movement - and waved placards to call for equal rights for Gay people. Wang Ping, organiser of the march, which is in its ninth year, said the turn-out was bigger than 2007. "Last year there were about 15,000.

There were about 18,000, and I saw some very young people taking part," she said. "This shows that more and more homosexuals are daring to stand out and be themselves. But we hope this 'dare to be oneself' can turn into participation in the Gay rights movements," she said.

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